

WINTER T.

IN

INDIA AND CEYLON

WITH

A KATHIAWAR PRINCE.

BY

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BOMBAY UNCOVENANTED CIVIL SERVICE.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

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PREFACE

WHEN this tour was determined upon, I cast about for a book on Indian travel to help me in arranging details. Though various books were available descriptive of different parts of the country, I could find no recent account of a regular tour through India such as we contemplated except large volumes, as Dr. Russell's account of the Prince of Wales' tour. It occurred to me, therefore, that any "notes" I might be able to take on our various journeys would serve as a guide to future tourists, and to us would always be an interesting record of our travels.

My charge, Kumar Shri Bhavsinghji, heir to H. H. the Rana of Porbandar, although of mature age knew little of the world outside his own State, and the tour was undertaken therefore not merely as a pleasure trip, but almost solely for educational purposes. The scraps of history, which the account of our tour contains, were gleaned from such books as came within our reach. I have quoted authorities only in a very few instances, as many of the books consulted were found in libraries on the march and have been forgotten. No pretence is made at originality. All the places we visited and such information as we give about them are familiar at least

to most residents of India. The descriptions of buildings and scenery are a simple record of impressions written down either at the time or in the quiet of evening, when our labours each day were ended.

I have been betrayed into one or two brief comments on customs and abuses common to Native races all over India, which, perhaps, do not rightly come within the scope of this account; but they have formed the subject of conversations between me and my charge, and may, in his future career, have influence for good. Much on these matters, which has passed between us in our constant association while travelling together, has been omitted.

In reading newspapers and in travelling through India, one cannot but notice the selfishness of some of the leaders of Native society, the apathy and superstition of the masses and the difficulties which really conscientious reformers have to encounter. There is little in evidence to show that any proper effort is being made to raise the poorer and more ignorant classes of society, while so many of the educated are clamouring for political power and representative Government. We—I mean, literally, myself and my charge,—have noticed, especially in purely Native cities, that great mansions and public buildings stand side by side with the hovels of the poor—hovels not fit for human habitation. If this is in a measure true of other parts of the world, efforts at least are made to remedy the evil. We have read with interest accounts in recent English newspapers, of efforts made by disinterested philanthropists and wealthy landlords to give improved dwellings to the poor,

and we could not help contrasting the number of benevolent institutions in Europe with the number of Pinjrapols in India. In our own little town of Porbandar, of 20,000 inhabitants, there is no institution for the alleviation of human suffering except a small medical dispensary supported by the State; but we have five Pinjrapols, supported by Mahajuns, for sick, maimed and decrepit animals, where numbers of animals are maintained in various stages of starvation, and where vermin are fostered and cared for. People, unacquainted with India, will scarcely believe that, where a high-caste Hindu would almost sacrifice his own life to save that of a cow, he would not touch a low-caste person to save him from untold suffering. Feelings and superstitions, which have been bred in the bone for countless generations, are not eradicated in one or two generations, but there is a great field for the philanthropist that shall arise from among the people themselves. All the great efforts made for the redemption of India have sprung from Europeans, and have borne good fruit; but from among themselves must arise the "prophet" that shall touch the hearts of the people.

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Pilgrim Ghat, Benares
Dubri on the Brahmaputra
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In the Snow—12,000 feet
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*Note.—*Owing to the difficulty and expense of reproducing the Photographs in India it has been decided at the last moment to omit Illustrations.

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WINTER TOUR IN INDIA AND CEYLON.

I.

THE P. & O. s.s. "Clyde" was advertised to sail at 12 noon on the 8th November, and arriving in Bombay from Poona by the early morning train, the few hours at our disposal were filled up among the shops and offices in the Fort. At 12 o'clock we were on board the steamer in the Prince's Dock and had to endure two hours of heat, noise and bustle before the steamer hauled out of the Dock and anchored opposite the Apollo Bundar. Here she was soon surrounded by swarms of cargo boats laden, principally, with opium for China. It was 7 o'clock before the cargo was all on board and 8 o'clock before the anchor weighed, and we were fairly on our way to Ceylon. In Bombay the heat had been very trying, but once out to sea there was a sensible change in the weather. The sky had a very monsoon look, the moon was obscured by heavy banks of cloud and a delicious cold wind blew off the land, just strong enough to crest the waves with a bright phosphorescent foam. This was the first time my charge had really left home or sailed on a vessel larger than the small Coasting steamers that run along the Kathiawar Coast, and as we leant over the side and watched the big black hull

of the vessel cut its way through the *Kalapani*, we felt that our travels had begun in earnest. The next day he made his first acquaintance with the noble games of "Bull" and "Buckets" and for a beginner played remarkably well.

The Coast line, though in sight from Bombay almost to Cape Comorin, is too far off to show more than a dim outline of distant hills, except off the Coast of Travancore, where we run closer in to the land. Here the contour of the hills bears a strong likeness to that of the hills on the shores of the Persian Gulf.

Among the passengers was a retired Indian Colonel with his wife and two daughters journeying to Tasmania, where they had already secured land under the auspices of Colonel Crawford, of Castra, Tasmania. When the time for retirement from India comes, I think most of us are willing to exclaim, "With all thy faults I love thee still." The Colonel certainly seemed to me to take long lingering looks at the receding Indian shores and spoke regretfully of the land that had practically been his home for upwards of thirty years.

We reached Colombo at 8 o'clock on Sunday night and were obliged to sleep on board as not a single passenger boat from the shore came alongside the steamer. This almost phenomenal occurrence in the busy sea-port of Colombo was explained by the presence of the P. & O. s.s. "Victoria," lying almost within stone's throw of where we were moored. She had arrived from England at 2 o'clock that day with 360 passengers for Australia and looked a veritable "floating palace". Her proportions magnified in the bright moonlight and the gleaming rows of cabin-lights rising tier upon tier, culminating in the electric light on deck, caused my companion to ask if they

were celebrating the *Dipvali* or festival of lights on board. We landed first thing the next morning and taking up our quarters at the Grand Oriental Hotel near the quay, presented our letters of introduction at Government House and met with a most cordial welcome. We were anxious, however, to get away into the highlands of Ceylon, and without delay, so armed with letters of introduction from Sir Arthur Gordon to Government Agents at Kandy and Nuara Eliya (pronounced Neuralia), we left for Kandy the day after our arrival in Colombo. At the Railway Station the officials insisted upon weighing every article of luggage, down to rug and pillows, but this infliction is carried out in a polite and orderly manner, and if the passenger is at first inclined to grow irritable at this excess of zeal, he soon realizes that every effort is made to relieve him of trouble and responsibility. His luggage is taken charge of bodily by a Sergeant of Police, weighed and labelled at the luggage office, and there is no need for further anxiety till the station of destination is reached, the luggage pass presented and the various articles released. ✓

II.

FROM Colombo to the foot of the hills, the railway line passes through interminable forests of palms. The cocoa and areca palm form the large bulk of the trees, but there are endless varieties that are not found in India, at least which are not met with along the ordinary highways. The country all along teems with vegetable life, but what strikes the visitor from India more than the foliage are the broad sweeps of green velvety sward.

Attached to the train is a refreshment car, in which an excellent breakfast is provided with good attendance. In our subsequent travels through India, where railway passengers have to scramble through hasty meals at roadside stations in the few minutes allowed, we often thought of the comfort of the Ceylon Railway, with its open refreshment car, enabling the traveller, not sufficiently æsthetic to live on beautiful scenery, to breakfast in comfort, while at the same time he enjoys a view of the country through which the train passes. The journey to Kandy is only of a few hours' duration, while journeys in India by rail may last for six or seven consecutive days—days which might be as comfortable as interesting if the commissariat arrangements were better.

As far as Rambukkana the line passes through perfectly level country, but from this station the ascent into the highlands begins. During part of the journey up, the view is confined by dense foliage on the one side, and on the other by the steep slopes of the mountain, round which the railway winds, but at intervals the prospect opens on to fertile valleys and beautifully wooded hills. To us, who have been accustomed to the railway journey over the Bhore Ghat between Bombay and Poona, the general effect is not so striking, perhaps, as it would be to the traveller from England or Australia, but the tea-gardens in their unbroken regularity, clothing the precipitous slopes of the hills and rice-fields of varied shades of green laid out in a succession of terraces, tier upon tier, lend a peculiar charm to the scenery on the journey between Rambukkana and Kandy. We reached Kandy at about 1 o'clock, after a pleasant journey of about six hours, and drove to the Queen's Hotel, situated on the lake road. The hotel commands a pretty view of the lake with its rustic bridges, its tiny wooded islet and the high thickly wooded hills in the background reflected in its clear depths. The Queen's Hotel at Kandy, like the Grand Oriental at Colombo, and the hotel at Mount Lavinia, are more comfortable in every way, we thought, than most of our Indian hotels. Ceylon servants are always clean, orderly and respectful, and would, I imagine, carry the palm among Oriental domestics. The hotels are under European management, and noticeable features are the neatness and cleanliness of the rooms and corridors, and the quiet systematic way in which work is carried on.

III.

KANDY, 1,600 feet above sea-level, is a change from the moist oppressive heat of Colombo to comparatively crisp mountain air. All the afternoon rain poured in torrents, but towards evening the weather cleared and we were able to get out. After a pleasant drive through forests of the most beautiful tropical verdure and past prettily laid out private gardens glistening in sunshine after the heavy rain, we drove to the house of the Assistant Government Agent, overlooking the lake, and presented our letters of introduction. We were fortunate in finding Mr. Neville at home, and spent an agreeable hour in discussing a programme for the morrow and looking over his splendid collection of local art curios—the collection of many years' residence in the island. We learnt that before leaving Kandy we would have an opportunity of seeing all the Kandyan Chiefs in full war paint, as they would assemble on the occasion of the departure from Kandy of a retiring Government Agent, present addresses and accompany him in procession to the Railway Station.

The following morning we were up early and drove out to the Royal Botanical Gardens at Peradinya, three miles and a half from Kandy. A letter from Mr. Neville to the

Custodian procured us special attention, and we saw the gardens under intelligent guidance. Ceylon is supposed, by a section of Mahomedans, to be the site of the Garden of Eden, and the exquisite loveliness of its vegetation lends colour to the idea. Ceylon is simply one vast natural Botanical Garden and the Royal Gardens at Peradinya are merely Ceylon and its marvellous flora in an orderly concentrated form. The walks are prettily laid out and beautifully kept, and the visitor may almost lose himself amid forests of the most gorgeous crotons and coleus. The rich colouring and luxuriant foliage of these plants eclipses anything of the kind one sees in India.

Giant bamboos, like giant ferns of some by-gone age, grow in dense clumps—each bamboo nearly a foot in diameter at the lower part of the trunk, and each tapering up to a height of about one hundred feet. In the centre, the clump parts and the feathery leaved switches fall over in graceful fronds. The bamboos are perhaps the most striking feature in this wilderness of tropical grandeur. Many of the trees and plants are familiar to the observant traveller from India, varying only in the intense richness of colouring and the wild profusion in which all grow. Nature certainly has been prodigal of her floral treasures here, and in the gardens their beauty is greatly enhanced by the artistic arrangement and grouping of varieties. In the fern-houses, the ferns and bigonias are beautiful beyond description, and the fern-gullies are a maze of feathery tree-ferns, like palms in miniature. We were privileged to see a Talipot palm (*Corypha umbra-colifera*) in flower—a rare privilege, as this palm is said to flower only once in forty years. Before leaving we were allowed to tap an India-rubber tree (*Ficus elastica*) and pluck trophies from the nutmeg, clove, all-spice and other trees. We spent a delightful two hours in the gardens and were loth to leave them. A museum

had just been started in connection with the gardens and, though then in its infancy, contained many varieties of botanical specimens. We were specially attracted by some pieces of the beautiful satin wood, which is in great demand for ornamental furniture, and fully deserves the name, as it exactly describes the wood highly polished. In the afternoon we witnessed the promised ceremony and presentation of farewell addresses to the retiring Government Agent. The Kandyan Chiefs, heads of the various clans, were present in their full national costume, which, though not wanting in dignity, is most peculiar and merits a somewhat detailed description. The turban or hat is about half a foot thick from base to crown, and tapers to a thin edge round the brim. On the crown a decoration, not unlike a branched candlestick in miniature, glitters with gems, and tiny pendants tinkle at every movement of the wearer's head. Round the neck is a collar, in shape something like an Elizabethan, turned down over a jacket of cloth of gold. The waist is wrapped in folds of cloth, which, etiquette demands, shall be thirty-six yards in length. This gives a fictitious portliness to the figure, which is supposed to lend dignity to the wearer's appearance. The continuations are very wide *pyjamas* fastened over the enormous waist-band and fitting tightly round the ankle.

The first address was read in English with an excellent accent by one of the Chiefs and was replied to in English. Next came an address in Pali, the sacred language of the Buddhists, chanted in quite Gregorian tones by the High Priest of the principal temple. This was followed by addresses from other temples and concluded by a paean of praise on the departing official by the local bard—one of the very few of his class who have survived the downfall of the Kandyan kings. The bard was a comical looking little old man with a nervous jerky manner, and he jerked

off his verses in, to us, a most ludicrous manner. After this the procession formed, but the effect was considerably marred by the rain which came down steadily the whole afternoon. First went a band of native music—tom-toms and reed instruments, which not even the rain could soften—next, six elephants gaily caparisoned followed by a string of carriages headed by the one containing the departing Agent. The show would, I believe, have been more elaborate and more characteristic but for the inclemency of the weather. ✓

IV.

WE were up early again the following morning and rambled over the hills with a guide, visiting a tea garden and cinchona plantation, and reaching the hotel well inclined for breakfast after the long walk and climb. In the evening we went out accompanied by Mr. Neville, and visited the celebrated rock temple, about two miles from Kandy, in which a recumbent figure of Buddha, about forty-five feet long and of gigantic proportions, is hewn out of the living rock. On the walls, cut in strong relief, are the figures of the "Coming Buddha," also of the deity specially charged with the care of Ceylon, and the deity who watches over mundane affairs generally, besides numerous other lesser luminaries of Ceylon Buddhism. We were conducted over the temple, and an adjoining monastery by an attendant priest, and our friend kindly acted as interpreter. The monastery is built somewhat after the style of houses in Pompeii, with an impluvium running down a centre court, but, instead of luxurious apartments on either side, the bare cells of monks open on to the courtyard. The temple and monastery are situated in a thickly wooded glen, into which no noise or bustle penetrates from the busy world without. There is something weird and uncanny about the large temple, and the deathly silence wrapping

the almost life-like image of the great ascetic, who worked and strove for humanity long before Christianity, and whose followers number more than one-third of the human race. The carving represents Gautama, in the state of "Waiting," and the conception is wonderfully carried out. The figure reclines on a couch hewn out of the naked rock, the head resting easily on one gigantic arm, the eyes are wide open but have a strangely far away look of expectation, yet repose. We were greatly impressed by our visit; but if the visitor would retain any feeling of solemnity for Buddhism of the present day, he should not inquire too deeply into the wretched superstition and idolatry that has sprung from teaching absolutely unpractical in its rigid simplicity and purity.

* . .

By the time we returned to Kandy, night had set in, and the "Temple of the Tooth" was brilliantly illuminated in honour of some local festival. A "Perehara" or religious procession, bearing the "Relics," was to leave the temple in about half an hour, and accompanied by our kind friend we hurried to the temple. The procession was already forming, and to our surprise, after experience of Indian temples, we were taken by an attendant priest into the very *sanctum sanctorum*, where the supposed tooth of Buddha is enshrined in a handsome silver casket which is not unlike the tabernacle of a Jewish synagogue. The courtyard of the temple was crowded with the halt, the lame and the blind, clamouring for alms. In the principal passage, seated in a row against the walls, were a number of aged nuns, who had come from afar to be present at the ceremony, and who have a vow to live on charity only. We dropped some silver into the cloth spread out before them and received a hearty benediction as we passed. Before reaching the inner or principal

shrine, we passed through several smaller chapels, each with its altar, relic casket and image of Buddha, each crowded with devotees bringing offerings of flowers held between the palms of the hands in an attitude of supplication. On reaching the principal chapel, a thick curtain was drawn aside, and we were ushered in by one of the priests. A heavy door closed behind us and we found ourselves in a small rectangular recess before an altar laden with flowers, principally jasmine; with the strong scent of the flowers mingled the perfume of incense, almost overpowering in the close atmosphere of the room. In the centre of the apartment was a second room containing the tabernacle of the "Tooth" visible behind the altar through the gratings of a strongly barred door. On the altar burnt an oil lamp of solid gold, apparently of considerable age and, alas! standing among the flowers that covered the altars were common European brass candlesticks of very modern make. The temple plate, which has been used here from generation to generation, and is only produced at special festivals was brought out for our inspection. The plate consisted of salvers and quaint looking vessels used in the service of the temple. They were all of gold studded with precious stones. One large salver set round with precious stones, on which *pan* and betelnut are offered to the tooth was handsome, if of rather rough workmanship. From this place we were conducted to another chapel in the same building, which was literally thronged with worshippers. A beautifully worked casket, standing on a pedestal in the centre of a railed enclosure, was opened for our edification by one of the priests, displaying a sitting image of Gautama Buddha, about ten inches high, cut out of a single piece of rock crystal, which sparkled and scintillated in the bright light that filled the chapel. The effect on the assembled worshippers was magical, some shaded their eyes from the

unveiled glory of the sacred image, others clasped their hands and bowed down in silent adoration, and all the kneeling figures looked the very personification of rapt devotion. We felt that, to these simple worshippers, our presence must seem a sacrilege and we were glad to hurry out of the temple. By this time the relics had been brought out, and the procession was ready to start. We repaired to an upper-storied, octagonal building, overlooking the courtyard of the temple, and stood upon the spot from which, we were told, generations of Kandyan Kings had bowed in adoration as the sacred relics were borne past. We had scarcely taken up our position when the casket containing the relics was placed on the back of an enormous tusker elephant, which was then conducted down the broad steps leading from the courtyard of the temple to the road. Here two other elephants were marshalled in front of him, and two others placed, one at either side, and the procession moved on with torches flaring and tom-toms rolling out deafening volleys. Behind the elephants walked the principal Kandyan Chief—head of the local aristocracy and guardian of the temple—clad in gorgeous raiment. An attendant held an umbrella of many hues over his head, presumably to add to his dignity, for the hour was 8 P.M., the sky was clear, and a fair moon shed fair rays on the scene. He was immediately preceded by two “devil dancers”—lithe black little devils—who sprang into the air and alighted in the most extraordinary, though not ungraceful, attitudes, as the procession moved out into the night, and we repaired to our hotel. ✓

V.

THE great "Tooth Temple" possesses no architectural beauty. It is a modern stucco building roofed with very common kiln-dried tiles, but containing, as it does, the fragment of bone, that the faith of millions has converted into Buddha's tooth, we thought it sufficiently important to photograph.

At 11-35 A.M., the train for Nuara Eliya, leaves Paradinya—the railway station for Kandy—and depositing our heavy luggage at the Queen's Hotel we left Kandy on a short visit to Nuara Eliya. The railway is complete as far as Nannoya, a distance of fifty-eight miles from Kandy, rising from 1,600 to 5,000 feet above sea-level. From Nannoya the journey is performed by coach to Nuara Eliya, a distance of four miles, and 6,200 feet above sea-level. A Dr. Davy, early in the present century, seems to have been the first European to set foot on the heights of Nuara Eliya, and like General Lodwick, the discoverer of the now fashionable hill-station of Mahableshwar on the Western Ghats of our Presidency, Dr. Davy was struck by its suitability as a sanatarium for his countrymen, weary and worn by the heat of the plains. He could hardly have anticipated that ere less than half a century had elapsed a magnificent broad gauge railway would convey pas-

sengers daily from Colombo to the "almost inaccessible heights," and that his enterprising countrymen would cover the slopes of the hills, then buried in impenetrable forests, with thousands of acres of the tea plant. It was not till the fifties that Nuara Eliya began really to open up, and it is only within the past five or six years that tea-growing has become so splendid an industry. To Malapitya, a distance of seventeen miles, the railroad rises to a height of nearly 400 feet above Kandy, but from this station the real ascent of the upper range begins. Our attention was soon rapt in the contemplation of beautiful scenery—high mountain peaks wooded from base to summit and the never-ending succession of hill and valley that each curve in the line disclosed. Recent heavy rain had swelled mountain streams into roaring torrents and trickling cascades into magnificent waterfalls. Anon, we crossed a lofty viaduct and looked down on to a foaming torrent that boiled and surged among huge boulders of rock as it fell headlong into the valley a thousand feet below. Out of the dull green of the forest shone the bright scarlet flower of the beautiful iron-wood tree, looking a veritable "flame of the wood." For the most part the railway winds slowly up the side of the mountain and by the dizzy edge of projecting spurs, and for the time the traveller may fancy he is being propelled by some mysterious power through vast unexplored regions, but now we plunge into the Stygian gloom of a tunnel in the bowels of the mountain and, emerging on the other side, find the illusion vanish. Down in the valley, or perched on the slopes of the hill, we see neat bungalows approached by paths that look mere streaks on the hill-side and then, literally, for hours the train runs past hills and valleys covered with tea and cinchona cultivation. Many of the tea factories and drying houses are close alongside of the

railway line, and in passing, we could see the huge wheel revolved by water-power, which worked the entire machinery of the factory. At about 5 o'clock in the evening, we reached the Nannoja Terminus and transferred ourselves and our belongings to the coach for Nuara Eliya. This conveyance, capable of seating seven passengers fairly comfortably, is drawn by three horses harnessed unicorn. The leader runs independently of the driver's rein and is *whacked* along by a man running at his side and resting alternately on the step of the coach. We got on, however, at a fair pace, and still continued to pass through tea cultivation alternated by virgin forest and deep ravines. On nearing the top, as the coach swept round a bluff, we caught a momentary glimpse of a perfectly gorgeous sunset. As evening closed in, beautiful, fleecy clouds had filled the opening of the gorge below, and the setting sun shone through the silvery vapour in a blaze of glory.

On getting into the coach at Nannoja, we had taken the precaution of putting on our great-coats, and now felt the benefit, as at the elevation of 6,000 feet the air was very chilly. By the time we reached the "Grand Hotel" at Nuara Eliya, my feet were quite numb and my companion looked perished, so I suggested a walk, and following the directions of the landlord, we did a couple of miles' smart walking, getting back to the hotel in a glow. ✓

VI.

HAVING arranged overnight for a guide, we were up soon after 6 o'clock the next morning, and by 7 o'clock were well on our way to scale the Padurutagala Mountain, commonly called Mount Pedro, 8,296 feet above sea-level, 2,000 feet above Nuara Eliya and five miles to the summit from the hotel. It was a lovely morning, and we strode gaily along, drinking in the delicious mountain air. For about a mile and a half, the way is perfectly level, and then striking up the mountain side and following a path cut like a tunnel through dense jungle, we found the atmosphere close and the climb rather toilsome. We did the walk from the hotel to the summit in an hour and three-quarters—not bad time for men not in training for mountaineering. On reaching the top, we stood on a small plateau, bare of wood, and before us lay a panorama of rolling hill and valley bounded by an horizon, where, literally, sky met sky in one great sea of fleecy, silvery waves, while nestling in the valley below, its pretty cottages peeping out from amidst the trees, lay the town and hamlet of Nuara Eliya. In the far distance Adam's Peak stands out boldly from among its lesser brothers, its peculiar conical shape and isolated position giving it a fictitious importance compared to the higher peak, on which we stood, and others of greater

altitude than itself, but which are less conspicuously situated. Mount Pedro is the highest point on the island, and is 744 feet higher than Adam's Peak, which ranks third in order of magnitude. Adam's Peak, so called by the Moormen or Mahomedans of Arab descent in Ceylon, who locate the Garden of Eden in the island, is a place of pilgrimage to three divisions of the inhabitants of the island. On the summit of Adam's Peak is a hollow in the rock, which faith construes into the impression of a human foot. The Moormen or Mussalmans claim it as the impress of Adam's foot, the Buddhists as that of Buddha, and the Sinhalese as that of Shiva, the third god of the Hindu *trimurti* or triad, in which he represents the principle of destruction. By these latter it is called "Shiva-na-padan," *anglice*, the foot-print of Shiva.

Our descent of the mountain and walk from the foot to the Grand Hotel occupied exactly one hour. Nuara Eliya is a pretty place, with a delightful climate and some beautiful rides and drives. The second morning of our stay, we drove out early to the Botanical Gardens at Hatgala, a distance of seven miles. The road, for the most part, skirts a deep ravine, on the other side of which the view is bounded by high hills clothed in alternate patches of forest and smooth green turf. The latter are a distinct feature of Nuara Eliyan scenery and have all the appearance in the distance of perfectly kept lawns. Approaching the gardens, we were struck by the number of tree-ferns growing wild in the hollows and gullies on the roadside. These were the ordinary natives, but in the gardens a surprise awaited us in the shape of gigantic tree-ferns, also natives of Ceylon, which towered overhead in the fern gullies like stately palms. We were passing them by unheeded, thinking from a cursory glance that they were palms, of which we had already seen an endless

variety, till our attention was specially drawn to them. The gardens are beautiful and contain numerous botanical treasures, but the Custodian was busy and unable to show us round, and, as we were leaving Nuara Eliya that day, our time was too short to allow us to hunt out the beauties of the place ourselves. We reached the hotel just in time to breakfast and catch the train for Kandy *en route* to Colombo.

Back again in Colombo, with its stifling heat and importunate vendors of cheap jewellery and Brummagem curiosities. Colombo is interesting and picturesque, and the drives and walks are delightful, if in its awful temperature one had the energy to enjoy them. Our stay in Colombo, however, was to be of short duration, so we mustered energy enough to see as much as possible in the time. We visited the Museum and spent an interesting time among the curiosities of Ceylon nature and art. To us, one of the most interesting cases was that containing the various produce of the cocoanut-tree, among which may be mentioned the nut itself, fans and mats made of the leaves, brooms made of the centre switch of the leaves, ropes, carpets, door-mats and bags made of the fibre platted, three different kinds of oil, soap, walking sticks, &c., &c. The Palmyra is also put to a multitude of uses, but cannot enter into competition with the cocoa-palm. Among Geological specimens is a splendid piece of green feldspar and a dazzling block of rock-crystal.

The collection of butterflies, moths and coleoptera is exceedingly varied and beautiful. The floors and shelves are covered with numerous other objects of great interest to the Naturalist—all collected in Ceylon and the neighbouring islands, the Maldives and Lacadives—but the distinctive feature of the Museum is, I think,

the "Devil Chamber." Here we have the various masks and disguises, varying only in degrees of hideousness, used by devil-dancers in the cure of different diseases. Devil-dancers are called in by a patient's friends to dispel by their wild antics the cause of the ailment, which is attributed to the presence of evil influences. Masks and disguises are used, according to the supposed character of the disease, and a dance sometimes lasts all night and not unfrequently results in the cure of the patient if the disease be light and faith unbounded. The patient often vows too that, should he recover, he will do a certain number of dances in the year following his recovery, and when the time for the performance of the vow comes round, he abandons all other work for the time, decks himself in garments as nearly approaching the popular conception of a devil as his means will admit, and donning an appropriate mask, dances till he falls exhausted. In the "Devil Chamber," which might well be termed the "Chamber of Horrors," are various representations of Sinhalese devils. One of these amiable demons is appeasing his demoniac appetite by a slight collation of three human babies. One is disappearing down his capacious throat, while two others are held wriggling, one in each hand, to follow. Another gentleman, whose appetite is in better taste, is devouring serpents. As both seem to proceed with their horrid meal, their great protruding eyes express a perfectly fiendish satisfaction. The Museum has only been in existence twelve years, but is full of marvels, "both of land and water, and well repays a visit."

Among other places, we spent a most enjoyable day at the Grand Hotel at Mount Lavinia, about six miles from Colombo. Driving out through the Cinnamon Gardens and suburbs, a most picturesque drive, we came back by the railway, which runs along the sea-shore among inter-

minable groves of cocoa-palms, and past the pretty sea-side residences of some of the wealthy natives of Colombo. The hotel at Mount Lavinia is built on a promontory overlooking the sea, and whether owing to its exposed position or the absence of houses and traffic, the air seems ten degrees cooler than at Colombo. Be this as it may, after the oppressive heat of the town, we were content to sit on the grassy lawn under the shadow of the hotel, and watch the tiny fishing boats, the hull barely visible under the enormous sail, glide in like mighty sea-birds skimming the water. They came on in flocks—to continue the simile—and ran up on to the shelving beach without lowering the sail. Each boat, as it was beached, was surrounded by a noisy crowd of men, women and children, who bore away the finny spoil. • • •

To my companion one of the most interesting objects in Ceylon was the Highland Regiment stationed at Colombo. He had never seen the kilt or heard the pipes before, and through the kindness of the Adjutant of the Regiment I was enabled to give him a close inspection of both. L

a population of 30,000 inhabitants. The trade consists principally in coir, coffee, pepper and cardamoms. Communication, north and south, is kept up by means of canals, connecting a series of lakes, and in the town itself, which is intersected by canals, all traffic seemed to be carried on by means of boats. The main canal runs east and west through the centre and has numerous branches radiating from it in several directions, well bridged at all crossings. We saw no carts on the roads, which are few and far between, but the canals were covered with boats, full either of passengers or cargo. The passenger boats are gaily painted and resemble somewhat the gondola of Venice. The town is picturesque and apparently clean and healthy, and there was an air of prosperity and contentment. A few hours sufficed for all the steamer had to do at Allepi, and we were not sorry to be once more on board, as the heat on shore was very trying.

Cochin was reached at daylight on the 1st December, and the anchor had scarcely dropped when the Port Officer came on board with instructions from the Government of Madras to show us attention during our stay. At Tuticorin by the advice of a fellow-passenger, a member of the Madras Civil Service, I had telegraphed to the Chief Secretary to Government, asking that the Port Officer might be instructed to meet us, as, being one of the oldest European inhabitants, he would be able to show us a great deal of the place during our short stay. We landed in the Port boat and at once proceeded, accompanied by the Port Officer, to visit Jews Town, the principal place of interest in Cochin. It might have proved unfortunate that our visit was paid on Saturday, the Jewish Shabaad (Sabbath), which is most strictly observed by these people; but, Captain Winckler being connected by marriage with one of the principal families, we met with

a cordial reception and were conducted at once to the Synagogue. Viewed from the outside, the Synagogue is a plain substantial building, scarcely distinguishable from the dwelling-houses in the street, and we were not prepared for the richness of the interior. A bright sun shone through the open windows, illuminating dazzling silver lamps, the silver railings of the pulpit and the beautiful old tesselated China tiling of the floor. The place was spotlessly clean and a rich veil hung before the Holy of Holies. The general effect was unfortunately marred by cheap modern globe lamps and coloured globe garden reflectors suspended from the ceiling, and the almost irresistible inclination was to pull down these ghastly disfigurements and leave only the quaint old silver lamps which hung by chains of the same bright metal to within a few feet of the floor. Our guide, one of the Rabbis, reverently drew aside the veil and disclosed five great rolls of vellum, each of which contained one of the five books of Moses. These strange people have been settled for upwards of a thousand years in Cochin and have preserved their religion intact and their distinct Jewish type unsullied by any admixture of local blood. Two copper tablets, preserved with jealous care, were shown us by the custodian of the temple. They are said to be 1,200 years old, and are inscribed in ancient Tamil characters, setting forth that the Rajah of Cochin grants permission to a party of Jews, presumably the ancestors of the present inhabitants, to settle in Cochin. These Jews are supposed to have come originally from Constantinople and have always been and still are known among the natives as "Istambouli," i.e. "of Constantinople." This part of the town of Cochin, forming in fact a separate town of itself, is inhabited solely by Jews. They must not be confounded with the Beni-Israelites or Black Jews of India.

whom we have had opportunity of observing in considerable numbers farther north on the Western Coast, especially in the Konkan. The "White Jews" of Cochin are as distinctly Jewish as the Syrian Jews of Baghdad, while the Beni-Israelites, although following the law of Moses from time immemorial, have in times past intermarried with the people, adopted Hindu customs and conformed in many respects to their idolatry. During our visit to Cochin Jews Town, some women and girls, almost blonde, but very delicate looking, crowded the windows to gaze on the strangers. These Jews have preserved the old Mosaic law most carefully, except in regard to the marriage law as affected by the disabilities of consanguinity. The observance of this law by so small a community determined to preserve its identity among another race was an absolute impossibility. The entire town is related in a greater or lesser degree, and owing, no doubt, to the want of an infusion of new blood the population has for some generations been sensibly diminishing. They are merchants and traders principally, and, of late, they have migrated in considerable numbers to Bombay and other centres of commerce within easy reach of Cochin. Besides Jews, "White" and "Black," Cochin contains Christians divided between the Roman Catholic and Syrian Churches, who respectively trace their origin to the old Portuguese settlers of the time of Vasco da Gama and to the missionary labours of St. Thomas the Apostle.

There are some interesting churches and monumental remains of the Dutch occupation, and more of intense interest than it was possible in our short visit to even touch upon. On our way back to the wharf we visited a factory, where matting and a great variety of other articles are manufactured from the various products of the cocoanut

palm.' The fibre is brought in a raw state by the native cultivators and passes through many processes till it is converted into yarn, rope and matting or carpeting of several degrees of fineness. The raw fibre, pressed in bales by hydraulic power, yarn, mats, oil and soap find an excellent market in England and America. No part of the tree is wasted. Watching the fibre being pressed into solid bales and hooped in the hydraulic press, we noticed that even the dry shells of the cocoanut were used as fuel to feed the furnaces.

During the day a number of Porbandar merchants living in Cochin for the purposes of trade came to pay their respects to their future ruler, and we held quite a levee. Each one brought a tray of cocoanuts, fruit, almonds, &c., the usual offering on such occasions, and all seemed greatly delighted to see their future Rana who, they said, was doing a wise thing in seeing the world.

Our next port of call was Calicut, where we found little to interest us and after lunch on shore returned to the steamer. At Budagiri we landed and having arranged with Captain Pattison to meet the steamer at Telicherry, the next port, we hired a "pony bandy" and drove the distance—ten miles. The road runs through pretty country, and about midway passes through the tiny French Settlement of Mahé. We stayed at Mahé, which is obtrusively French in its small way, long enough to photograph the Governor's house and the Coal Depôts. Telicherry and the following ports of Cananore and Mangalore present little of interest to the traveller, but Goa, our next port, where we made a stay of two days, teems with objects of historical interest and we looked up authorities.)

VIII.

THE steamer reached Marmagao at noon, and at 4 P.M. we started, accompanied by a fellow-passenger, for Donna Paula on the other side of the water. The natural harbour of Marmagao, almost unprotected from the south-west, has been greatly improved by a splendid but very expensive breakwater, which enables steamers of considerable tonnage to lie safely under the shore, even in the boisterous south-west monsoon. The Western India Portuguese Guaranteed Railway, built by an English Company and managed by Englishmen, connects the Portuguese province of Goa with the English railway system of the Southern Maratha Country and had at the time of our visit only recently been opened to traffic. We heard a good deal of adverse criticism on the policy, which allowed much of the trade of the Southern Maratha Country to be diverted from its natural outlet, Karwar, a British Indian port with a splendid natural harbour a few miles south of Goa, into a channel in foreign territory.

Marmagao has never been a place of importance, but in the latter end of the seventeenth century, the Count of Alvor, Viceroy of Portugal in India, set his heart, in opposition to all advice, upon removing the capital from the site which it then occupied, near the present site of

Panjim, to Marmagao. His principal reason seems to have been that the new site afforded stronger natural advantages against invasions, which were then frequent, but an exhausted treasury, decaying power, and an impoverished and miserable population were strong reasons against the attempt, and his retirement from India delayed the work for a time. In his subsequent appointment of President of the Ultramarine Council in Portugal, Count Alvor was in a position to insist on the work being carried out, and for a time it was pushed on with vigour. Again, on his retirement from the Ultramarine Council, the work was abandoned and finally stopped in 1712 A.D. "Thus ended the frantic attempt at rearing a new capital, "which cost no less than £25,000 to the already impoverished state and served only to accelerate the fall of the city."* All that remains to testify to the Count's folly is a grand old building, the Viceroy's palace, surrounded by antiquated fortifications, which was only occupied by one Viceroy for a few months in 1703, and is now used as offices and residences for a few English Railway officials. Marmagao is situated on a promontory forming one of the horns of a large bay, and across the water is the village of Donna Paula and the Governor-General's Summer Residence situated on a promontory forming the other horn of the bay. This building stands on a point considerably above and overlooking the sea, and is approached through beautifully wooded grounds, forming a charming summer retreat. At Donna Paula, we were fortunate in securing a carriage and drove to Panjim, the capital of the small Portuguese possessions in India, a distance of about seven miles. At Panjim we put up at the only hotel in the place, which is kept by the retired butler of some Anglo-Indian official.

* Fonseca's History of Goa, from which most of our information is derived.

We were up before daylight the following morning and drove out to Goa-Velha (old Goa.) Outside the town, we passed over a long causeway of red laterite across a salt marsh, which forms part of the main road connecting the new with the old capital of Goa. Owing to its unhealthy situation old Goa was abandoned and removed to Nova Goa, the town of Panjim nearer the sea, in the latter half of the last century, the work having been begun in 1777. A few years previously, the joyful notes of a *Te Deum*, celebrating the conclusion of peace with the Marathas, had hardly died away, when a panic seized the authorities at the defenceless position of the capital, and re-opened the question of transferring it to Marmagao, but the idea was not carried out. For years the fortunes of the Portuguese had been rapidly declining, and the once prosperous capital had only the inanimate testimony of its great public buildings to tell that it had ever been great. The majority of these buildings were churches, convents and religious houses of every description, and now a few of these are all that meet the traveller's eye—the remains of a great ecclesiastical hierarchy.

Arrived at old Goa, we wandered in and about the old buildings, nearly all of which are in a wonderful state of preservation amid a scene of awful desolation. All the churches are kept up and have resident priests. Mass was being celebrated in the Church of Bom Jesus, which contains the shrine of the great Apostle of India, St. Francis Xavier. Within the Church are several separate chapels, in one of which the body of the saint repose in a most elaborate sarcophagus. As it now stands, the building is a most imposing pile, and yet we learn that it is but a part of the original edifice, which comprised a college and house of the Jesuit Fathers by whom it was built. The refectory was capable of seating two hundred persons at

meals and, in the height of the prosperity of the Jesuit order in Goa, the building is described by a traveller as "a superb building, which would have been regarded in Europe as one of the most beautiful religious houses." We carried our camera with us and took photographs of this and of the other principal churches and of the gates of the old palace of the Moorish Viceroys, who governed the province on behalf of the Bahmani kings of the Deccan and afterwards as Viceroys of the Adilshahi kings of Bijapur. Among the churches, the one which affords most food for meditation as illustrating the intolerant religious spirit of the times is perhaps the church and convent of San Caetano. The church, which was built about the middle of the seventeenth century by some Italian friars of the order of Theatines, covers a sacred well in which Hindus performed religious ablutions. This well is in the centre of the nave covered by a marble slab immediately under a lofty cupola, which from the outside is a distinctive feature in the architecture of this edifice and seemed to confirm at the time the story we had been told that the church was a Christian adaptation of an old Hindu temple. The church is said to have been placed deliberately over the well, which was in the centre of one of the principal squares, to prevent the "heathens" from openly offending the susceptibilities of Christians, but the water of the tank is still considered sacred by the Hindus of neighbouring districts, and sums of money are frequently offered for a few drops.

Of the "Palace of the Inquisition" founded in 1560, not a stone remains to tell that "this large and majestic edifice" ever existed. It contained "a large and magnificent hall, surpassing in grandeur even the splendid hall of a royal palace," galleries, a chapel, dormitories, inquisition chambers, quarters for the principal Inquisitor, two hundred cells, which had to be increased owing to "the

increasing number of arrests made by the orders of the Inquisition," and with an imposing façade of black stone, of which a traveller remarked at the time of its might that the "black outside appears a fit emblem of the cruel and bloody transactions that passed within its walls." But we remembered that these horrors represented the spirit of the time, and if in our own land no "Palace of the Inquisition" stood as a blot upon legislation, the social and religious enactments of that and later periods will as little bear the criticism of more enlightened modern times. The site of the Inquisition is pointed out and is a desolate spot, even amid the surrounding desolation. To the student of Indian history, Goa is a most fascinating place, and though our stay there in the flesh was short, we have often wandered back in spirit to the desolate site of the great capital. For these, the veracious chronicles of our travels, we will not go back to early times, but try and picture the Goa of the Bahmani kings of the Deccan, their successors, the Adilshahi kings of Bijapur, and the Portuguese of by-gone generations.

In 1469 the Bahmani king, Mahomed Shah, in pursuance of a long-cherished design, sent a large army over the Western Ghats, which after a victorious march arrived before Goa, while at the same time the city was invested from the sea by a fleet of the enemy's ships. Goa fell, and less than thirty years after in the dismemberment of the great Bahmani kingdom of the Deccan, it came under the rule of the Adilshahi kings of Bijapur. From its capture by Mahomed Shah in 1469 to its recapture in 1510 by Albuquerque, the Government underwent various vicissitudes, which do not appear, however, to have affected the commerce or material prosperity of the capital. At the time we are writing of, it was "one of the principal emporiums of trade on the Western Coast of India, and the great centre which attracted

people of various races and creeds from different parts of Asia." It was in direct trade communication with the much over-rated Ormuz of Milton and many other "centres" of commerce, whose brilliant "past" has merged into modern Bombay, the great capital of our Western Presidency.

When the fillibusters of the Mahomedan kings were swaggering through the streets of the capital, and later the victorious Albuquerque "mounted on a noble and richly caparisoned steed entered the city amid drums beating and trumpets sounding," and later still, when the *fidalgos* of Portugal vied with each other in the splendour of their retinues and priests covered the land with proud monuments of the humble teacher, who, centuries before, had wandered by the lonely shores of Galilee, Bombay was a dreary swamp or, at best, the exile home of a few British merchants struggling to defend themselves against the marauding Marathas. Now the magician's wand, in the shape of the steamer "Ethiopia," with its kindly English skipper, changes the scene, and from the desolation of desolation emphasised by the great lonely churches, with their solemn-toned bells which summon no worshippers, we are transported to the site of the old swamp, where the "proud capital" of to-day rejoices in the motto "Urbs Prima in Indis." ✓

I X.

WE got back to Poona early in December and intended leaving almost immediately on our further tour, but unavoidable delay occurred, and it was the 2nd of January before we found ourselves once more on the move. After much deliberation we determined to make a slight alteration in our original plans, return to Bombay and travel north by the B. B. and C. I. Railway and on through Rajputana.

We arrived at Jeypur after an uneventful journey of about thirty-six hours in the early morning of the 7th January, and were met at the Railway station by rival *touts* from the Kaisar-i-Hind Hotel and the Dâk Bungalow. These gentlemen talked to me and at each other most volubly, and as the representative of the Kaisar fairly beat his opponent out of the field, while we looked on amused, we determined to consign ourselves to his care, and as his papers showed that he was a good guide to Jeypur, we engaged him at once and dubbed him, "Fergusson" after Mark Twain's excellent example. The morning air was cold and bracing, and after a hurried *chota hazree* we started off under the guidance of Fergusson to see the town. I had always heard Jeypur extolled in unmeasured terms and had longed to see it. The disappointment which supervened therefore was not an

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in a day to please an ambitious architect's fancy. Under the grand frontages on a level with the street are rows of dirty little shops from eight to ten feet deep, literally boxes let into the walls. The streets are crowded with dirty sellers and buyers, squalid children, sleek fat cows side by side with Pharaoh very lean kine mangy and in the last stages of decrepitude, hungry pariah dogs, filthy, greasy fakirs and religious mendicants of every degree, some perfectly nude. In short, Jeypur is a model Hindu city, and licensed beggary of every description goes hand in hand with animal decrepitude in every loathsome stage of loathsome disease. The vaunted walls of the city enclose filth and sham architecture, and the writers who have gone into ecstasies over this lovely Hindu city must have contented themselves with the distant view that lends enchantment. Standing on a neighbouring hill one morning at daybreak and looking down on a beautiful modern city, nestling in an amphitheatre of hills, we could hardly realise how a nearer inspection had dispelled the enchantment. But even seen from this elevation, with the city rising out of the grey mists of morning, we felt that a spell was upon us, that the Genii of the Arabian Nights had been at work during the night, and that the delusion must vanish in the glare of the noonday sun.

The city was founded and the present design carried out by Maharajah Sewai Jeysingh II in 1728, and could the great founder have lived on through succeeding generations, Jeypur would have ranked, not merely among the beautiful cities of native India, but among the gems of the earth. The conception is there, but like everything oriental in the hands of orientals from ancient kingdoms to modern municipal institutions, personal individuality has alone been powerful. It is probably heresy to write of Jeypur in these terms, but during a long residence in India I have

agreeable surprise. I do not mean to say that our visit was not interesting; it was all that could be desired, and Jeypur and the ancient city of Ambar are intensely interesting, but the reports we had heard and read in guide-books were misleading, and we do not feel justified in adding to the rapturous accounts of the place. From the B. B. and C. I. Railway guide-book I take the following: "Jeypur, the capital of the territory of Jeypur or Ambar, is one of the most beautiful and interesting cities in India.

* * * * It is entirely surrounded by a wall of masonry, with lofty towers and well protected gateways." This is incorrect, but excusable. It is so rare to find any town purely oriental, which bears the semblance of order and regularity in design, that Jeypur must certainly rank first, but only among the *capitals of Native States*. The main streets are wide and in good repair; along either side run broad paved pathways, and viewed from afar, regal mansions appear to rise up on both sides. All these magnificent edifices are painted a rich pink, and the effect in the early morning, the slanting rays of the sun shining on dome, kiosk and minaret, is both beautiful and unique. These are first impressions which, alas! are quickly dispelled. On closer acquaintance later on, the whitened sepulchre is laid bare and the unreality of the mansions becomes painfully apparent. Even driving rapidly through the street, we catch glimpses of sky through open windows and stucco trellis work, and nothing but sham façades stand revealed. Occasionally an apparently magnificent mansion conspicuously grand, even among its stately companions, shows signs of actual occupation, but through ornamental oriel windows we see that it extends back about twelve feet, revealing pokey little rooms and balconies. The city is all frontage, all show—a child's city of gaudily painted cards, run up as it were

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craved to see and know Jeypur. We have seen it as it is and can imagine what it might be. What it is, is disappointing.

After breakfast on the day of our arrival in Jeypur, we called on the Resident and then drove to the City Palace which is approached through dust, squalor and dirt, but once through the "Golden Portals" and another sphere is reached. We were not allowed to enter the palace itself, as it is devoted to the women-kind—wives and others of the Maharajah—of whom we were told there were several hundreds, but after wandering through a most exquisite parterre, by purling brooks and over ornamental bridges we were conducted to a beautiful building containing the billiard saloons and lounging rooms of the late Maharajah. The rooms are littered with the heads and horns of black buck and other trophies of the chase, and the walls are decorated with cheap coloured prints. Among the pictures, however, there are some good oil-paintings of the late Maharajah, of Queen Victoria, Prince Albert and Lord Mayo. The billiard tables, we were told, are never uncovered now, but were in constant use during the reign of the late Maharajah, who appears to have been of more active habits than the present ruler. The palace is an imposing edifice in the Rajput style of architecture, and the grounds in which it stands are quite in keeping with it. Before leaving we were taken to the Dewan-i-Am, or public Hall of Audience, a very handsome apartment spoilt by cheap stucco ornamentation and painted frescoes. This place is used on state occasions only. The furniture was all in drapery, but some of it was uncovered for our inspection and proved to be of ordinary European make. The golden palanquin, in which the Maharajah attends state ceremonies, was kept in the hall and is a handsome piece of local workmanship. We were then shown the

Dewan-i-Khas, or private Hall of Audience, in which his Highness receives private visits or holds less ceremonial functions. As a matter of fact, these places are seldom used now, the present Maharajah having an aversion to State. The palace is unoccupied, save by part of the Zenana, and the Maharajah himself prefers to live in a private house outside the town, formerly occupied by a British Government Official. The Dewan-i-Khas is very like the Dewan-i-Am in form, but on a much smaller scale, and is built entirely of white marble. Having bestowed douceur on a very civil attendant who showed us round, we proceeded to visit the royal stables. These stables were built by the great Jeysingh upwards of 180 years ago, are of excellent design and are kept in good order. In front of the long rows of stalls is the exercising ground, with a raised platform, from which the Maharajah sometimes watches his horses being put through their paces. We saw some really fine specimens of horse-flesh, among which we were proud to recognise some extremely handsome Kattyawar mares and horses. The animals were all as fat as prize pigs. They are fed on ghee (clarified butter), milk, sugar and rice, as their royal master loves a fat horse. The animals were simply in rolls of fat, and it was sad to see a splendid English coal-black horse and an Australian with quarters like well-stuffed feather pillows. They were all well-groomed and as sleek and shiny as elbow grease could make them.

Our next visit was to the place where the hunting cheetas and lynxes are kept, and for our edification a lynx was led into a square, and lumps of raw meat thrown into the air soon brought down swarms of vultures. The lynx crouched on the ground as if petrified, and allowed the birds to swoop down and circle round him, apparently unnoticed, when suddenly like a flash of light he sprang

into the air and seizing a bird dexterously by the neck, pinned it to the ground, and proceeded to tear off the feathers round the neck and suck the blood. He was led away, dragging his prey after him. We had been all this time in the hands of our guide, and as lunch time had come and gone, he grew most anxious as to our need for food, clinching many arguments in favour of an adjournment with "you will have to pay for your tiffen, sar? Better to eat." We merely bade Fergusson lead on. We were athirst for sight-seeing, and as the next spectacle was the Royal Bengal tiger, such frivolous necessities as tiffin would not stop us. The tigers were certainly very fine specimens, but, like the horses, too fat. We arrived at the cages at feeding time and huge lumps of raw meat lay untouched in each cage. We spent a few minutes at this place, and as the hour of 4 o'clock was drawing nigh, and we had been out all day, we returned to the hotel and after tea, drove to the Botanical Gardens by appointment to meet the Resident and hear the Maharajah's band. We were agreeably surprised in the band, which is probably the best band composed of native performers in India. The band-master, a German, has been in charge of the band for years and takes the keenest interest in it. It is numerically stronger than the bands of most Native Infantry regiments. The evening's programme ended in loyal fashion with our grand English National Anthem and the few Englishmen present uncovered.

X.

THE foundation-stone of the Albert Hall and Museum, which stands in the public gardens, was laid by the Prince of Wales on his visit to India in 1875-76, and the funds were provided by the late Maharajah. Our photograph was taken, while some of the scaffolding was still up, and several of the corner kiosks remained to be added. The following extract from the *Illustrated London News* of November 1888 gives some details regarding the object with which the building was designed and the way in which the work was carried out: "This noble edifice has been built by the Maharajah of Jeypur entirely under the superintendence, and from the designs, of Colonel Swinton Jacob, R.A., having been the work of many years. It is of white marble, and the exterior and interior pillars, walls and screens are enriched with carvings of marvellous beauty. It is worthy of note that every piece of carving is different and unique and that for each carving a number of various designs were modelled of full size, so as to judge of the effect when completed, and the most beautiful of them were then selected to be sculptured in pure white marble by intelligent native workmen. For many years past a band of draughtsmen have been employed in making designs for this purpose

"from carvings of the most exquisite art which adorn the famous architectural monuments of India, those of Delhi "having yielded by far the richest store of examples."

The interior of the building is quite in keeping with the exterior, and various works of art are beginning to fill the glass cases in the museum. So far the most interesting spot in the interior, apart from architectural beauty, is a corridor, the sides of which are illuminated with scenes from the Mahabharata in the most florid style of Hindu-painting. The pictures are typical, and by each a scroll in English, Hindi and Urdu describes the scenes which, together with the colouring, are purely oriental. The first represents the great gambling scene in the Mahabharata in which Yudhishtira, the eldest of the five Pandu brothers, was induced by his enemies, the Kauravas, to play a game of *chaupar* with their champion Sakuni. By means of loaded dice the latter won Yudhishtira's kingdom, as well as Draupadi, the wife of Yudhishtira and his brothers. One of the Kauravas attempted to insult Draupadi by tearing off her dress, but the God Krishna interposed, and as her assailant pulled, the end of the cloth miraculously lengthened, leaving the dress unaffected. In the picture, Yudhishtira and his opponent are represented throwing dice, round about are their respective friends and adherents, and the lengthening of Draupadi's *saree* is cleverly depicted. The next picture is a scene from the same epic, representing the ancient marriage choice ceremony, in which Damayanti holds a tournament at which his daughter is to choose a lord. Nala, reputed ancestor of the Maharajahs of Jeypur, attended to compete, but the great Gods, Indra, Varuna, Agni, and Yama assumed *Nala's form*, and each asked her hand. She replied : "I will do homage to the gods, but not wed with you," and prayed Indra to show her how to distinguish the real

Nala from the Gods who had assumed his form. Moved to pity, Indra replied that their forms cast no shadow, nor did their feet touch the earth, their eyelids wink, or their bodies perspire. The picture represents the maiden leaning out of her palanquin, bestowing a wreath of jasmine on the real Nala, the successful suitor. The pictures must be intensely realistic to Hindus. While we were there each one had its knot of admiring spectators.

XI.

THE public garden, the museum, the well-kept public roads and, above all, the perfect water-supply of the town owe their existence, if not their origin, in a great measure to Colonel Jacob—the water-supply especially, which is the greatest boon ever conferred on the town. The latter supply a want which has been felt by the people and rulers of Jeypur for generations. Where the town was once dependent on a few meagre wells, it now has the benefit of a practically unlimited supply of wholesome water. By the kindness of Colonel Jacob, a special visit was arranged for us to the water works, and we were met and shown over the place by the European Mechanical Engineer in charge, and spent some time among the machinery. To illustrate the power of the pumps, the engineer opened a cock in the yard, outside the engine-house, and a jet of water shot sixty or seventy feet into the air. We walked over the dam, which is a magnificent piece of work and built, as it is, on a liberal scale, has converted the river at this part into a splendid artificial lake, covered at this season of the year with duck and teal. Among the many architectural and other monuments of exceeding great beauty but questionable utility in the modern city of Jeypur and the ancient Ambar, the water works stand out as eloquent

testimony of Western skill and perseverance. The following description given me at Jeypur of the present water works and the futile attempts made from time to time in previous years to give Jeypur a proper water-supply will convey some idea of the magnitude of the works and their great benefit to the people.

There is a nullah which rises in the hills north of the city of Jeypur and flows past the town about a mile west of the city. In former times, when the bed of this nullah was not very deep, the people used to make earthen dams across the stream, and after the rains divert the water, by an open cut in the ground, to the city. As there was no natural escape for the water in the rains, it generally overtopped the dam and scoured out the bed of the stream. As the soil is nothing but sand, and the slope of the river-bed is steep, this caused the bed of the nullah every year to become deeper, and in time obliged the people to make the dam higher up-stream. But the same action occurred here also, and at last the size of the dam and the expense made it almost impossible.

It was then decided to try and bund up the nullah with a masonry dam, which should enable the flood waters to escape over a masonry apron and so save the annual trouble and cost of an earthen bund. Accordingly about 50 years ago, a masonry bund was built, and a masonry covered duct was made from it.

The masonry dam was about 500 feet long and 60 feet high, and was built of good masonry, and in section was quite strong enough for its purpose, but it was not adapted for a place where the bed and banks were only sand. There was no adhesion between the masonry and the sand ; the water when it filled got round the west wing wall, carried away part of the bund and scoured out a large open-

ing at the end of the dam. So the city remained without a water-supply, and had to depend only upon wells.

About 20 years ago an engineer officer was lent by the British Government to the Jeypur State, at the request of the late Maharajah, Sewaie Ram Singh, to help the Durbar in its public works. He examined the country all round for many miles, but it was found necessary eventually to depend upon the same nullah as before. Instead, however, of building a masonry dam, it was decided to put steam pumps near the water in the nullah and to force the water up into a masonry reservoir on high ground near, and from this to allow it to gravitate in iron pipes through the city.

A small masonry weir was built across the bed of the nullah to prevent the bed cutting any lower, and the down-stream side was protected with an apron of rubble stone and slabs to prevent any scour. A pumping house was erected, and is fitted with 2 pairs of 11 horse-power horizontal expansive condensing steam engines. Each pair is furnished with two sets of pumps, capable of throwing 36,000 gallons an hour, connected to a wrought-iron air vessel.

Everything is in duplicate, so that in case of any accident, there is no stoppage in the work.

A good arrangement is the means adopted for heating the water before it is admitted to the boilers; the cold water pipe is made to circulate in the flue of the chimney, and so gets heated by the hot air which passes away to the chimney, and is then admitted to the boiler; by this means, instead of having to raise cold water to boiling point, heated water only has to be raised, thus saving fuel.

A filter is also provided, and any impurity in the water is deposited on fine sand.

The water is pumped by the engines 109 feet high up through two 9-inch iron pipes into two large service reservoirs, which are covered over with masonry arches. While one of these is being used to supply the city, the water is being pumped into the other, so that the consumption of water can be seen daily by the depth which is drawn off. Each reservoir is 150'X100' in area and 15 feet deep, and will contain about 236,385 cubic feet of water. It can be filled in about 48 hours by one set of pumps and will last for about three days.

From the bottom of each of these reservoirs there is a 12-inch pipe fitted with a gauze wire strainer and fitted with a valve, which can be opened and shut as required, and by this means the water passes into a 12-inch iron main to the city, which is about one mile distant and 50 feet below the reservoirs. This height, or head of water, causes the water to rise anywhere in the city to the first floor of all the houses.

There are stand-posts at the corners of all the streets, from which any one can draw any quantity of water at any time during the day or night.

Special places are provided with India-rubber hoses, where water-carriers can fill their mussacks without any trouble, merely by turning a tap. Pipes are also taken all over the Palace, into the public squares, where special taps for bathing purposes have been erected, and into the public gardens to supply the fountains.

After about 10 years, so much water was consumed that it was difficult to meet the demand; for, although in the rains much water flowed away to waste, yet in the hot weather there was scarcely enough to keep the pumps

supplied. It was accordingly decided to bund up the river, so as to retain the water of the rains to meet the demand in the hot weather; but instead of a masonry dam, a bund of earth was adopted. The reason of this being that the banks being only earth, it was considered that the earth of the bund would bind with the earth sides and not allow the water to pass out as occurred in the previous masonry dam, where there was no cohesion between the wall and the earth; and this has answered well.

The banks of the nullah are here 61 feet deep, and the bund is made the full height of the banks, 400 feet thick at the base, with a slope of 4 to 1 on the water side and 2 to 1 on the outside and 30 feet wide at the top; so that, besides impounding the water, it serves as a bridge across the nullah, and enables traffic to go across on a level, instead of down into the bed and up again the other side, which has proved a general benefit to the country around.

An escape is provided at a height of 45 feet high by cutting an open channel at a slope of one foot in a mile to the natural surface of low ground in the distance.

A masonry water-tower and tunnel is also provided to draw the water off if necessary. In this tunnel are two cast-iron pipes, each 12" diameter, to which the water can be admitted by valves when required.

The object of the bund was to ensure a constant supply of water; this has been accomplished; 15 feet stored would be ample. As there is now about 27 feet, with the view of utilizing this surplus and reducing the head of water, a turbine has been erected below the bund. This is a horizontal water-wheel. Water is admitted to it from the two 12-inch pipes which come from the tunnel. This forces the water-wheel round, and by cog-wheels the motion is imparted to a crank which drives three small

horizontal pumps, which force the water up into the service reservoir about 110 feet above it and 2,000 feet distant, at the rate of about 6,000 gallons an hour. This saves fuel, and is an auxiliary to the steam pumps.

The water which works the turbine passes down the nullah, and is afterwards used for irrigation of fields lower down.

The whole of these water-works have cost about Rs. 6,58,170 = £ 65,817, and this has been a free gift to the city, originated by the late Maharajah Sewaie Ram Singh and completed by the present Maharajah Sewaie Mahadeo Singh. The annual cost of maintenance is about Rs. 45,522.

XII.

AMONG the art manufactures of Jeypur is statuary, consisting principally of representations of the various gods of the Hindu Pantheon sculptured in black or white marble. In this art, Jeypur, I believe, eclipses any other of the cities of India, besides ranking first in the manufacture of enamelled gold ornaments. The enamel composed of glass or crystal, coloured with metallic oxides, is worked in different designs into the burnished surface of the gold, and has a very pretty effect.

Having devoted all the time we could spare to modern Jeypur, we started one morning early for Ambar, the ancient capital of the State. After passing through some of the main streets, we turned into the slums—slums in the real sense of the word—and, after a few minutes' drive, emerged into the open country, and our way then lay through miles of ruined mausoleums, temples and palaces. Every gateway is crowned with kiosks in a wonderful state of preservation, and about midway between Jeypur and our destination, the "Water Palace" of the old Jeypur Kings stands, a solitary but well-preserved ruin in a wide sheet of water, covered with water-fowl of many kinds. At the foot of the steep ascent leading to the Ambar Palace and forts, a pad elephant awaited us, kindly provided by the Durbar. At a word from the *mohini*, Nazuk Feri, the delicate fairy, by which name our new conveyance was

known, knelt, and we mounted to the pad by means of a ladder. The pad was fairly comfortable, and in a few minutes Nazuk Peri was labouring up the steep ascent. From a pass on the summit of the incline, we got a magnificent view of modern Jeypur on the one side and on the other of the ancient city of Ambar in the valley below, almost buried in the jungle that has apparently sprung up since its desertion. The heights around are crowned with forts and battlemented walls. The Palace towered immediately above us, but to reach it on the elephant a considerable détour had to be made. As Nazuk Peri's progress, notwithstanding her name, was elephantine and slow, we descended and made a short cut through the *Dil árám*, or Heart's-ease Gardens, to the Palace. After passing through the gardens, which still retain much suggestive of their original beauty, the ascent of the hill was steep and difficult. Fergusson, I should explain, had for some time past been relieving himself of a vast fund of information under which he appeared to labour; but he was evidently more accustomed to grace the coach-box of a carriage in his character of show-man, than to mountaineering. Before we had got half way up the hill he was panting like an asthmatic rhinoceros, and for some time after we reached the top had no breath left to fire off much information, and we enjoyed a short respite. We first entered the courtyard of the temple of Silla Devi, the female essence of Shiva, the destroyer. The ancient city derived its name from Ambar, one of the titles of Shiva, who numbers a large section of Rajputs among his devotees. Inside the courtyard of the temple Fergusson recovered his breath, and without pause of any kind, and in an unvarying monotone, delivered himself to the following effect:—"This, my lords, is the temple of the goddess Silla, another name for Kali—the

ruby-eyed mother, or Bhowani. Eighty years ago and for many years previously, a human sacrifice was offered every morning to the goddess till the British Government interfered and forbade the human sacrifice, and a goat was substituted. That is the sword (pointing one out) with which the sacrifice was performed, and the same weapon is now used to cut off the head of the goat. The head must fall to the ground with one stroke, and if the stroke fail the first time, it is considered that the sacrifice has not been accepted, and another goat is offered. Yes, my lords." This was all fired off without punctuation and unfettered by the restrictions of English grammar. I have taken the liberty to transcribe it in my own fashion. With all due deference to Fergusson's superior knowledge, I think the ordinarily accepted story is more correct. *Tradition* hath it that in *ancient* times a human victim was sacrificed, but that for many generations the custom of offering the daily sacrifice to Silla Devi had become extinct. After the modern city of Jeypur was founded, the goddess is said to have appeared in a dream to its founder, Joysingh and reproached him for allowing her shrine to be neglected. On waking, he ordered that a goat should be daily sacrificed and priests maintained for the service of her temple. This mandate has ever since been religiously carried out.

At every new place Fergusson offered the one form of entertainment in the shape of garbled information delivered in a parrot-like manner and without any trammels of punctuation. So monotonous grew the tone that we almost felt that he was qualifying to revive, in his own person, the old sacrifice. The walls surrounding the palace-grounds enclose many large buildings, and we wandered about among these for some time, pausing at last before the entrance gate of the Palace

itself. This lofty gateway is a most exquisite piece of workmanship, and is in as perfect a state as if just out of the builders' hands. Here the camera was produced and a good photograph of the gateway obtained. With the time at our disposal it was impossible to devote much attention to the Palace with its long corridors of polished chunam, its dome-shaped reception-rooms and bedrooms, its chaste marble carvings, its walls decorated with mosaics in countless little mirrors, relieved here and there by vases of flowers cut in relief in coloured mica and the wonderfully enduring beauty of the *tout ensemble*. We visited the *hamau* or royal bathing apartments, where marble plunge-baths, dressing-rooms with marble flooring, and pipes for flooding the baths with hot or cold water are all as perfect as if just finished. We also made our way out to a lofty cupola, forming part of the ornamentation of the roof, and having set up our camera under its friendly shade, took a photograph of the distant hill fortifications built by Maharajah Ambar Singh. From this point a splendid view is obtained. In front, the vision is limited by a range of hills crowned with watch-towers, bastions and curtain walls, evidence of rough times when war's rude alarms compelled every Indian ruler, great or small, to be well protected against his neighbour. Away to the right a thickly wooded valley stretches for miles, while rising out of the dense vegetation an occasional kiosk and minaret mark the extent of the ancient city. The most conspicuous objects in the landscape are the dome and minarets of a mosque, which is said to have been built in two days and a half. The story runs that the great Akbar, third Moghul Emperor, who reigned in the sixteenth century, wrote to Maun Singh, then Rajah of Jeypur, asking if there was a mosque for the service of the true God and His Prophet in the town. There

was no mosque as the Ambar Kings were devout Hindus, but they also bore the honourable title of *huka bardar* (pipe-bearers) to the Moghul Emperors, and Maun Singh in terror, lest such a revelation would draw down upon his kingdom the wrath of Akbar, replied that there was one. At the same time orders were given that a mosque should be built in two days, and the actual time taken in completing the work was two days and a half. This is a weak form of fable one hears in different parts of India, in relation to many buildings, but I mention it as a fair sample of Eastern hyperbole. The mosque is covered by a beautiful dome flanked by tall minarets with ornamental cupolas. The more probable story is that Akbar, who was very tolerant of all religious sects himself, noticed the number of Hindu temples in Jeypur and the absence of any Mussalman place of worship, and ordered the mosque to be built for the use of the faithful dwelling in Jeypur, and that the work was completed as quickly as human means would allow.

Bidding farewell to Ambar and the beautiful monuments of her departed glory, we returned to Jeypur, well content with our morning's work.

When calling on the Resident, we had expressed a wish to be allowed to pay our respects to the Maharajah. His Highness can seldom, I believe, be induced to receive visitors, and leads a comparatively retired life; but as my companion was a Rajput Prince on a visit to the State, the desired permission was accorded, and a quarter past six the evening of our return from Ambar was fixed for the interview. We were received by the Maharajah and his Dewan in the veranda of his Highness' private house, and in the dim twilight could barely distinguish each other's features. As well as we could judge by the feeble light, the Maharajah was a portly young man, and must have been

of prepossessing appearance when leading a more active life than he has done for the past few years. After the interchange of a few civil speeches we left, the usual ceremony of *atar* and *pan* being dispensed with. Before leaving, however, the Maharajah kindly promised to arrange a cheeta hunt for us for the following morning. We had been about half-an-hour in the hotel on our return from the Maharajah, when the Superintendent of the Shikar Department called to arrange for the hunt, and it was settled that we should be on the ground at 8 o'clock in the morning. Two English lady-travellers, whose acquaintance we had made at the hotel, accompanied us, and, punctually to the hour agreed upon, everything was in readiness. There was quite a collection of bullock-tongas surrounded by a small army of *shikaris* of sorts. Two of the tongas were reserved for our party, and accommodating ourselves as best we could in these quaint little vehicles, we were soon driving straight across country, labouring through soft, yielding sand in the bed of a dry nullah, crashing through thick grass almost of the consistency of bamboo, or steeple-chasing over the crest of a ridge. The two cheetas hooded brought up the rear in carts with their keepers. It was a lovely bright morning, crisp and cold, and our amusing efforts to hold on to the tongas created much merriment. After about two miles of this work, we began to see deer in ones and twos, and suddenly topping a ridge came in sight, not two hundred yards away, of a herd consisting of several full-grown buck and about sixty or seventy does and young buck. Still the cheetas were kept hooded, and no movement was made on the part of our hosts. I softly questioned a stalwart Rajput trudging alongside of our tonga, and was told that the cheeta could not be let loose in a herd, as he would probably kill a doe. This would not be considered sport,

as the quarry is the stately black buck. We were within a hundred yards of the herd before it moved off, and I longed for a shot at one of the bucks. We journeyed on quietly as peaceful travellers, and began to fear our chance had been lost when, about four hundred yards off, we spied a solitary full-sized buck with good horns, grazing unsuspecting of the character of the peaceful travellers. The procession of carts and tongas moved slowly on in a zig-zag course, gradually lessening the distance till within about a hundred and fifty yards when, showing signs of uneasiness, the deer began to edge quietly away. I saw the keeper of the finer cheeta of the two gently stroke his neck and face. Evidently a signal, for the cheeta started up, and the hood being suddenly removed and the leash slipped, he glanced instinctively in the direction of his prey, sprang lightly to the ground and, trotting a few paces forward, crouched behind a tuft of high grass. The keeper and one or two men hid behind a bush and the carts moved away so that the deer's suspicions were allayed, and he continued quietly to graze. The cheeta, who was now within a hundred yards, followed stealthily, taking advantage of every cover, stopping and crouching if the buck stopped, but each moment lessening the distance. Presently the buck, evidently alarmed, stopped suddenly and tossed his head in the air. Too late !! Throwing off all attempt at concealment, the cheeta literally flew. Our lady-friends kept their seats in the tonga; but we had got out when the cheeta was first loosed, and followed the *shikaris*. The excitement was now intense, and we dashed forward regardless of bush and bramble and, cutting off the chase at an angle, were just in time to see the cheeta racing within a yard of the fleeing buck. Suddenly the cheeta seemed to make a supreme effort and coming on a level with the buck's

quarters, clawed with his powerful forepaws as a cat might, breaking one of the deer's hind legs. This only slightly diminished the buck's speed, but sufficiently to give the cheeta the opportunity of striking him in the withers. The buck reeled, and the cheeta, springing forward, buried his fangs in the poor beast's throat. Going at headlong speed and on a slight incline, the two rolled over and over as one. In our excitement we were almost up with the struggling pair, when the jemadar of the party called in an alarmed voice to us to keep back, as the cheeta, it appears, is unsafe to approach immediately after the first shock. The deer had ceased to struggle, and the cheeta crouched over him, his fangs buried in the throat. We were all anxiety now to see how the cheeta was to be recaptured and enticed back to his cart. He was left to himself for a few moments, and while intent on the deer, the keeper came cautiously up, slipped the hood over his eyes and drew him back to the cart, where he was regaled with a reeking "bone". This sport is, I know, common enough in parts of India, but we had never had an opportunity of seeing it. From the instant the cheeta springs lightly to the ground and gliding stealthily from cover to cover, free to follow his natural impulse, to the supreme moment when, throwing off all effort at concealment, he overtakes the deer in mighty bounds of perfect grace and freedom, the excitement at least to the tyro is beyond description.

Another attempt was made with the second cheeta later on, but failed, and we were not anxious for a repetition. The next day was fixed for our departure from Jeypur, and we were oppressed with the feeling that much had been left undone. But our tour was to be fairly extensive and to be confined to the winter months, when alone travelling in India is pleasant, so that we could not afford to stay longer.

XIII.

INTERESTING as our stay in Jeypur had been, we were all eagerness to reach Delhi, the last capital of the former Imperial rulers of India, with its marvellous historical associations from its mythical foundation in 1500 B.C. to its siege and recovery by English Troops in the Mutiny of 1857. Leaving Jeypore by the mail train at 8-30 on the morning of the 10th January, we reached Delhi the same evening between 5 and 6 o'clock, and drove to the hotel known as the "Dak Bungalow". During the Mutiny this place was used as an ammunition store, and was subsequently fitted up as a *Dak Bungalow*, and, though for some years past an hotel, still retains its old name. Here we were fortunate in securing a successor to Fergusson of Jeypore, equally voluble, equally brimming over with information, equally objectionable, but, withal, most useful.

Our first visit was to the Fort and Palace of the Moghul Emperors, now guarded by the red-coated soldiers of their European successors. Passing over a draw-bridge and through the deep archway of the Lahore Gate, where a sentry of Bengal Native Infantry stands to attention, we emerged into an open square surrounded on three sides by the barracks of the European troops quartered in

Delhi. Driving past the Naobut Khana or Music house, now occupied by the Sergeants' Mess, we drew up at the Diwan-i-Am or Public Hall of Audience. The most striking feature in this spacious apartment, now used—shade of Imperial Aurangzebe!—as a Canteen for the British soldier, is a raised throne built into the wall and entered by a doorway from the back. Here the king sat and gave audience to the crowd of Ambassadors, Rajahs, Officers *et hoc genus omne*, who thronged the hall below. Having duly admired the beautiful marble carving and inlaid work of the throne and pondered on the mutability of human affairs, as illustrated by the canteen, we passed on to the Diwan-i-Khas or Private Hall of Audience. Between the Diwan-i-Khas and the Rung Mahal, or Palace of Pleasure, is the Summon Borj, a sally-port opening on to the right bank of the Jumna, through which the aged Bahadur Shah, the last of the Delhi Kings, made his escape on the fall of Delhi during the Mutiny. Taking refuge in Humayun's tomb, about four miles from Delhi, he was pursued by Major Hodson, of Hodson's Horse, and betrayed by a relative into Hodson's hands. The story of his capture and the execution of his two sons are matters which have elicited much hostile criticism, but the times, of course, justified unusual action.

On one of the arches of the Diwan-i-Khas, inlaid in the marble in letters of gold, is the inscription in Persian characters, familiar to readers of Moore's "Lalla Rookh":

"Agar Furdoze bur ruë zemin ust,
 "Haminusto, haminusto, haminust."
 "Here maidens are sighing and fragrant their sigh,
 "As the flower of the amra just oped by a bee :
 * * * *
 "And own, if there be an elysium on earth,
 "It is this, it is this."

The last lines in italics are the translation of the Persian inscription. In this beautiful hall was the celebrated Takht-i-Taus (Peacock Throne), with the still more celebrated Koh-i-nor. The ceiling of the hall, which was originally of silver, was carried away by the Mahrathas at the sack of Delhi in 1759, A. D. The story of the capture of the citadel on this occasion told by Mr. H. G. Keene in his "Fall of the Moghul Empire", concludes : "It was tenanted by a weak Mussalman force, which had been hastily thrown in under the command of the nephew of Shah Wali Khan, the Daurani Vazir. After a brief bombardment, this garrison capitulated and Sadasheo Rao, the Mahratha commander, took possession and plundered the last remaining effects of the Emperors, including the silver ceiling of the Diwan-i-Khas which was thrown into the melting pot and furnished seventeen lakhs of rupees (£170,000)." The ceiling was in a very dilapidated state till a few years ago, when it was repaired by Government, and, while we were going through the various chambers, workmen were engaged renovating and restoring.

Cut in relief, in white marble, on one side of the arch in an apartment adjoining the Diwan-i-Khas, are evenly balanced scales, emblematic of the justice which the Kings of Delhi seldom administered, and below are open work marble screens of most exquisite workmanship. The Hall of Audience looks out on to the sacred waters of the Jumna and commands a view of an extensive stretch of country beyond. The flooring of the Royal Baths, adjoining the Diwan-i-Khas, and the arches of pure white marble were originally inlaid with cornelian, jasper and other precious stones in pretty designs. Most of these were, however, picked out during the licence which followed the capture of the city at different times and their places have been supplied with

excellent effect by coloured lac, which is susceptible of a very high polish, and to the uninitiated is hardly distinguishable from stone. In this and other buildings the domed and groined ceilings, which are said to have been of precious metals, have been replaced by plain stucco. Close to the Diwan-i-Khas and within the same walled enclosure is the small Moti Musjid or Pearl Mosque, a bijou dream in marble and gold. This and the enclosure now forming a barrack square were, in the old days before the Moghul power had dwindled to a shadow, laid out in gardens jealously screened from the public gaze. A different story is told, however, of the state of these grounds when the palace was entered after the capture of Delhi in 1857. The writer learnt from an officer, who was in charge of the Palace guards at the time, that the squares were dirty and neglected and filled with the huts and hovels of unkempt followers.

From the Palace and fort we journeyed to the Jumma Musjid, literally the Friday or Sabbath Mosque, as distinguished from private and other mosques scattered about the city. Among Christian places of worship the Cathedral would correspond to the Jumma Musjid of Moslems. It is a magnificent great pile of buildings surrounded by high walls entered by lofty gateways of red sandstones approached by wide flights of stone steps. Viewed from afar the *tout ensemble* is most imposing; near, it can only be taken in in sections and neglect and disrepair are painfully visible on all sides. Within the walls we were conducted to a small room carefully barred and locked. It was opened and we were shown a hair from Mahomed's beard carefully closed in a small glass case, also a slab of stone bearing an impression of the prophet's foot. These treasures, which are believed to have come originally from Arabia, are guarded with jealous care. A venerable Moolah is in

charge and displays his "relics" only, alas ! for *bucksheesh* sake. Before leaving we were allowed to ascend one of two minarets, 130 feet high, flanking the mosque, and obtained a magnificent view of the city, and were able to follow the course of the Jumna for miles. We subsequently visited the various scenes, within and without the walls, hallowed by the self-sacrificing deeds of the handful of British troops that took the city from the mutineers in the famous siege of 1857. I am tempted here to transcribe the account given by the well-known authority, Mr. H. G. Keene, B. C. S.: "The taking of Delhi in 1857 was "perhaps a greater feat of arms than many which are "more talked of, and is one that, without disparage- "ment to Native valour, may be truly said to have "been impossible, except between Europeans and Asiatics. "Here was an *enccinte* of more than five miles, with cur- "tains, bastions, gates, ditch, counterscarps and glacis, all "designed and partly carried out by European Engineers, "with a strong arsenal and a complete park of heavy "guns, taken by a handful of men (of whom indeed a "portion were Natives) at the first serious assault."

* * * * *

"Early in the morning of the 11th May 1857, the revolted "troopers of the 3rd Bengal Cavalry, who had escaped "chastisement at Meerut, trotted across the bridge of boats "and entered the city. The whole of the garrison, being "Natives, joined them, and the work of villainy began. "Mr. Simon Fraser, the Resident, Captain Douglas, com- "manding the Palace Guard, with the Chaplain and his

Note.—It is a strange comment that in 1804, when the walls were dilapi-
dated and the ramparts in ruins, the walls were successfully defended by a
weak garrison under the command of a *European*, Sir David Ochterlony,
against a besieging force of 20,000 men, with one hundred pieces of cannon,
commanded by Holkar. Strange to say, the restoration of the walls had only
been completed a few months before the Mutiny and were in perfect order.

"daughter, were killed at the main gate of the citadel.
 "Colonel Ripley and other officers of the 74th Native In-
 "fantry were pistolled in front of their own men, standing
 "passive; the magazine was invested, and the Europeans—
 "men, women and children—chased over the walls of the
 "city to be shot down or driven to the temporary shelter
 "of the Flag-staff tower, as might be their fate. * * *"
 "But the tables were to be turned, though at first slowly.
 "Victorious at Badli-ki-Serai, the small avenging force
 "found themselves, on the evening of the 8th June, face to
 "face with all that the tourist of to-day sees basking in
 "the beautiful winter sun-shine from Hindu Rao's house.
 " * * * From the 8th to the 13th September the gun-
 "ners of England beat incessantly upon the northern walls.
 " * * * On the evening of the 13th the Engineer
 "Officers reported two practicable breaches, one at the
 "Cashmere Bastion, the other at the Water Gate; these
 "stormed and the Cashmere Gate held by a third column,
 "due provision being made for support on the rear
 "and right flank, and all the columns might meet
 "victorious at the barbican of the Palace within. As the
 "day broke on the following morning, the incessant roar
 "of the past week came to a sudden and ominous
 "pause. The 60th Rifles, according to previous arrange-
 "ment, sprang out with a cheer to cover the advance, and
 "Salkeld and Home, of the Bengal Engineers, stepped
 "forward with non-commissioned officers, bugler, powder-
 "carriers, to blow in the Cashmere Gate. The scene that
 "followed is thus described by Colonel Medley, R.E., an
 "eye-witness:—"Followed by the storming party, 150
 "strong, Home and his party reached the outer gate almost
 "unseen; with difficulty they crossed the ditch, and hav-
 "ing laid their bags retired unharmed. It was now
 "Salkeld's turn. He also advanced with four other bags

" " of powder and lighted port-fire, but the enemy had seen
 " " the smallness of the party, and the object of their
 " " approach. A deadly fire was poured upon the little band
 " " from the open wicket not ten feet distant. Salkeld laid
 " " his bags, but was shot through the arm and leg, and
 " " fell back on the bridge, handing the port-fire to
 " " Sergeant Burgess, bidding him light the fuse. Burgess
 " " was instantly shot dead in the attempt. Sergeant Carmi-
 " " chael then advanced, took up the port-fire, and succeeded
 " " in the attempt, but immediately fell mortally wounded.
 " " Sergeant Smith, seeing him fall, advanced at a run; but
 " " finding that the fuse was already burning, threw him-
 " " self into the ditch * * * *. In another moment
 " " a terrific explosion shattered the massive gate, the
 " " bugle sounded the advance, and then with a loud cheer
 " " the storming party was in the gate-way, and in a
 " " few minutes more, the Cashmere Gate and Main Guard
 " " were once more in our hands * * * *. The progress
 " of the assault is matter of military history. The
 " saddest interest that attaches to it is connected with
 " the fate of General Nicholson, of whom the Punjab
 " Government recorded that, but for him, Delhi would not
 " have fallen * * *. After leading his column over
 " the breach by the side of the Cashmere Gate he reformed
 " his men (detachments of the 75th and 1st Fusiliers,
 " and the 2nd Punjabis) by the Main Guard. Turning to
 " the right, by the narrow lane behind the city walls,
 " Nicholson next proceeded to open a way parallel with
 " the ramparts and had already captured the Cabul Gate. In
 " proceeding towards the Burn Bastion he received a check
 " from the breastwork and one gun on the ramparts; and it
 " was in waving on the men against this obstacle, his fine
 " form in advance, conspicuously displayed to the fire of
 " countless enfilading muskets from the windows that

"lined the lane, that he received his mortal wound and
"was borne to the rear."

We visited the spot where he fell and one could not but feel greatly affected. The very spot on the ramparts and the window from which the shot was fired, only a few yards off, are pointed out. These may or may not be accurate, but are sufficiently so to recall the scene to an imagination rendered tense by the excitement of going over ground; almost every inch of which is rendered sacred by the heroic gallantry of the small band of British soldiers.

The road from Delhi to the Kutub Minaar, a distance of eleven miles, passes through a succession of monumental remains of the past, dating from the dawn of the Christian era to the present century, full of interest to the antiquarian and historian, but hardly coming within the province of our tour. Our time was too limited to admit of a visit to the numerous places of interest along the road, and we confined ourselves to a visit to some of the more prominent. The ruins of the Jantar-Mantar, the observatory of the Emperor Mahomed Shah, we visited as a matter of special interest to my companion, having been built by the Rajput Maharajah Jaisingh of Jeypur in 1730. We also visited the tomb of Safdar Jang or Munsur Ali Khan, a Minister in the time of the Emperor Ahmed Shah, about the middle of the eighteenth century. It is an imposing edifice, but is spoken of as "a monument of the degradation that befell Moghul architecture in the century following the building of the Taj at Agra."*

The Tomb of Humayun, the second of the Moghul Emperors, is some distance off the main road, but is too interesting to be passed by unnoticed. Humayun had an intermittent reign of twenty-six years from 1530 to 1556. During the greater part of this time he was an exile

* Keene.

from home, forced to fly to Persia by the Afghan, Sher Shah, after the battle of Kanauj in 1540. The tomb, the first of the many monuments of its time that adorn Agra and Delhi, was begun by the widow of the Emperor, Haji Begum, and completed by Akbar. It possesses a curious interest from the strange coincidence of its being the last resting place of one of the first of the House of Timur and having afforded a temporary asylum three centuries later to the last of the House—the fugitive Bahadur Shah and his sons during the Mutiny of 1857.

On arrival at the Kutub, we ascended the winding steps of the lofty Minaar, 238 feet high, tapering from a diameter at the base of 47 feet to about 9 feet at the pinnacle. From here we obtained a perfect bird's-eye view of the distant city of Delhi and the surrounding country. Ruins and well-preserved monuments that cover the place for 20 miles round and extend almost in an unbroken line from the Kutub Minaar to modern Delhi, give the casual visitor, with a "Fergusson" holding forth, an exaggerated idea of what appears to have been at one time one continuous city, now shrunken into the present limits of Delhi. This, however, is not the case. At our feet round the Kutubare ruins of Anang Pal's fortification—Anang Pal, the founder of the Tuar Rajput dynasty about the beginning of the eleventh century—and far away in the distance between us and modern Delhi, lies the "Purana Kila" or old fort the site of Indraprasthra said to have been founded by Yudisthera, reputed son of Dharma (god of justice) in 1500 B.C. "On the 35 sq. miles of this plateau, where it is washed by the Jumna, the successive Asiatic capitals of India have been built from 1500 B.C. to 1857 A.D." * With the visit to the Kutub ended our stay in Delhi.

XIV.

ON Sunday night, after an early dinner, we left by train for Lahore. The large saloon carriages of the N.-W. Railway seemed unusually spacious after the long journey from Ahmedabad to Delhi in the tiny carriages of the Rajputana State Railway. The night was bitterly cold, but beautifully bright. Reaching Lahore the next evening at 4 o'clock, we were conscious that we had got beyond the tourists' beaten track and had left the tribe of "Fergusson" behind. We had cleared our luggage and were watching two box-like *ticca* carriages being loaded with our effects, before an hotel commissionnaire appeared on the scene, to our relief, I must confess. We were borne off in triumph, willing captives, to a neat-looking bungalow not far from the Railway Station, in a fairly well-kept garden. The exterior view was decent, but an inspection of the interior economy determined us, notwithstanding the blandishments of a civil landlord, to seek further and we had little difficulty in discovering Nedou's Hotel, which we had been advised to go to. It is some distance from the Railway Station, but very comfortable and beautifully situated.

Having paid our respects to Sir James Lyall, Lieut.-Governor of the Punjab, we determined to make the most of our time in the capital. Lahore is considerably over a thousand miles north of our starting point,

cool retreat one can easily imagine the hot winds and clouds of dust that come in with summer. On our return to the hotel, I found a note awaiting me from the Private Secretary in reference to wishes we had expressed at our interview with Sir James Lyall. We had asked if any arrangement could be made for us to see something of a sham-fight that was to come off the next day near the Camp of Exercise at Mian Meer, and the note informed me that the main body of an attacking force, under Sir Hugh Gough, would rendezvous near the Lahore Jail, at 10 o'clock A.M., and that two horses for us and two mounted orderlies to accompany us would be at the hotel at 9 o'clock. Arrangements had also kindly been made that on our arrival at Peshawur, our destination after Lahore, we should be able to visit the Khyber Pass and Ali Musjid, and a telegram from the Officer commanding the Khyber in reference to our visit accompanied the Private Secretary's note.

At 9 o'clock the next morning we started, attended by two tall troopers of the XII Bengal Cavalry. After proceeding about a mile along the main road, we struck across country, amid clouds of dust, and were not long in coming up with several batteries of Field Artillery and three regiments of Native Cavalry drawn up on the dusty plain. The Infantry Brigade was somewhere in the rear, but there was no wind, though the morning was cold, and the movements of the troops had stirred up volumes of dust, which hung in clouds over the plains and made it impossible, on the same level, to see much beyond our immediate neighbourhood. The position we were in was not of much use to us, so accosting an officer of Bengal Cavalry, who was passing with a party of mounted signallers, we received a cordial invitation to join him. Our party trotted and cantered across country in search of a commanding position from which to obtain a favourable

elevation for signalling information to the advancing force. Having scrambled to the top of a considerable hillock, we were in a favourable position to command a view of the fight, and were not long on our coign of vantage, when we saw the enemy's cavalry scouts dotted across the plain. This information was signalled, and a body of cavalry was immediately after scouring the plain and driving back the hostile scouts. Shortly after this, the Field Artillery came into action and the dull boom of the big gun mingled with the rattle of musketry continued for some time. Our signalling party, however, could not stay long where they were, and bidding them adieu we joined the Officer commanding the Cavalry Brigade. My companion had never seen anything more serious than the Birth-day parade at Poona and was excited and interested in watching the nearest approach to real war. It was 2 P.M. before we got back to breakfast at the hotel after seven hours in the saddle.

"the carved doorways of the chamber below by Ahmad Shah Durani, while Ranjit Singh carried off the marble lattice parapet which surrounded the roof and the galleries of the towers." In the present tomb there is little to recall this grandeur, while the walls and gateways are partly in ruins. Truly hath the glory of its splendour departed.

The story of the Emperor's marriage and subsequent devotion to the Nour Mahal, or "Light of the Haram," of Moore's beautiful poem, is a familiar romance of Indian History, and carries the Christian reader back to the older, but perhaps more familiar story of King David and Uriah the Hittite. Mihrunissa Khanum was the daughter of noble Persian parents, resident at the Court of Akbar, father of Jehangir, then Prince Salim. The girl was very beautiful and captivated the young Prince, but Akbar, like parents of more modern times, to save his son from a mésalliance, we must suppose, had the girl married to a young Persian named Sher Afkhan, who was then appointed Governor of a distant province in Bengal. When later on Salim ascended the throne under the name of Jehangir, remembering the love of his youth, he wrote to the Viceroy of Bengal to try and induce Sher Afkhan to divorce his wife, a very simple proceeding under Moslem law. The overtures made by the Viceroy were indignantly repulsed by the Persian and in a duel which ensued both he and the Viceroy were killed, and after some time Mihrunissa Khanum's wrath and indignation at what she rightly considered the murder of her husband being appeased, she became Empress of India under the name of Nour Mahal (light of the haram) which was subsequently changed to Nour Jehan (light of the world). She was beautiful and clever, and once reconciled to her new sphere, was an influence for good in the life of the Emperor.

XV.

OUR visits the following day were many and varied, and I must confine myself to mentioning the prominent few. We first drove to the Fort, which is garrisoned by one company of a British Regiment and one of Native Infantry. The guards are held during the day by Native and at night by the European soldiers. One of the most interesting places in the Fort, round which we were shown by a European Private, after recording at the gate our names, etcetera, is the old armoury, which contains a curious collection of mediaeval and modern weapons and chain-armour, with helmets, morions and steel breast and back plates. There are, too, some old uniforms, rather clumsy imitations of the uniform of the British Royal Horse Artillery, in which Ranjit Singh loved to deck his gunners.

Among the curiosities may be mentioned a toy sword and cannon, which are said to have been among the play-toys of Dhulip Singh's childhood. There is a curious old flint-lock revolving musket with four chambers, also a strange combination of sword and crutch, with which the wily Ghazi is said even now, across the border in Afghanistan, to feign lameness in order to circumvent an unsuspecting foe—a most deadly weapon wielded

by a strong arm at close quarters. The armoury also contains some war-worn Afghan standards taken in many a bloody border fray.

From the Fort we journeyed, as a matter of course, to the tomb of Ranjit Singh, the Lion of the Punjab. This is by far the most interesting object in or about the city that witnessed Ranjit Singh's first efforts towards the extended sway he subsequently obtained over the Punjab. The tomb is a quaint building, unique, I think, of its kind. The sarcophagus lies in a vaulted chamber and covers the ashes of Ranjit Singh, his four wives and seven slave girls, who were sacrificed on his funeral pyre. In the recesses of a gallery above this chamber and running round the base of the dome are gaudily painted pictures depicting scenes from some mythological drama. From a field outside the walls of the Fort we obtained a photograph of the mausoleum.

The history of Ranjit Singh is one of the many instances which the East affords of the rapid rise to power from comparative obscurity of a clever, ambitious man not troubled with a very tender conscience. Ranjit Singh was born in 1780 at Gujeranwala in the Province of the same name in the Punjab. His father, a Sikh Sirdar, was one of the heads of the twelve organised clans, into which the body of the Sikhs was divided. The father died while Ranjit was still a child, and his widow, an ambitious woman, immediately assumed the reins of government. As the son grew up and showed signs of the power that eventually earned for him the soubriquet of Lion of the Punjab, his mother, to retain the position that had devolved upon her at the death of her husband, tried to restrain the growing ambition of her son by bringing him up in an effeminate manner. When Ranjit was seventeen years of age his mother died

where internal dissensions, murder and anarchy followed the death of a powerful ruler, whose personality alone held in check the ambition of selfish aspirants to power. Ranjit Singh's death was the signal for the usual assassinations among his relatives and Ministers of State, while the huge army, which his ambition and desire for conquest had kept in constant employment, became troublesome and clamorous for war. The child, Dhulip Singh, of recent newspaper notoriety, son of Ranjit Singh, by his favourite wife, Chand Kaur, had been proclaimed Maharajah, but anarchy and confusion were ripe throughout his dominions, and the Sikh army, which had become completely out of hand, crossed the Sutlej in December 1845 and ravaged British territory, bringing about the first Sikh War, which ended in the Sikhs, under Gulab Singh, being driven with great slaughter back over the Sutlej. A few days later the British army followed. An interview was accorded to Gulab Singh and other leaders of the Sikhs, and the young Maharajah, Dhulip Singh, made his submission in person. His authority was restored and the territory, lying between the Beas and the Sutlej, was retained by the British as war indemnity. The British army then retired, but less than two years later followed the second Sikh War, in which the Sikhs proved stubborn foes, but were utterly crushed in the celebrated battle of Gujarat in February 1849, by a comparatively small British force under Lord Gough, the Sikhs numbering 60,000 men.

Lord Dalhousie, then Governor General of India, determined at the close of this war to bring the turbulent Punjab under British rule as the only means of ensuring peace, both in the Punjab and the adjoining territory of British India. The Maharajah, Dhulip Singh, agreed to

XVI.

AT Lahore so different does everything seem from life in the lower provinces that the traveller feels he has reached the upper corner of India, but before him lies a railway journey of a full twenty-four hours to the frontier station of Peshawur and twenty four miles by road to the Khyber Pass.

Leaving Lahore by the mail train at a quarter past six in the morning, we arrived at Peshawur the following morning at about the same hour. From Lahore we passed through fertile plains covered with winter crops. At Gujerat, the scene of the great battle, the town was apparently holding high festival. Crowds of people in their "Sunday best" were wandering about, while on a meadow skirting the railway line, in an enclosure marked by gaily coloured flags, a battle of a very different kind was being fought, probably by the descendants of some of the heroes of "Gujerat." Two "Elevens" of the youth of the town were engaged in a very serious cricket match, England's national game, and were surrounded by admiring spectators. No gate-money, dear reader; these things are free in our sunny land of Ind. *Apropos* of cricket, we saw the game played in the Punjab by Punjabis, in all its phases, from the small boy's rudimentary cricket to the grown-up game of two elevens.

The Attock Bridge, which spans the classic Indus, we crossed at midnight, but visited later on from Peshawur. Hassan Abdah, which is said to contain the tomb of the heroine of Moore's immortal "Lalla Rookh," we also passed at dark. It was a lovely moonlight night, and not to miss even a passing glimpse of some of the more noted places we were awake during the greater part of the journey, notwithstanding the bitter cold. As the moon rose we witnessed, through the windows of our carriage, an effect that for a few moments was quite inexplicable. Far away over the snow-capped tops of distant hills, the outlines of which were just perceptible against the sky, a mysterious light arose and spread like a great halo, bringing the line of the hills into bold relief. It never occurred to us that the moon must be rising and as the sky grew brighter and brighter our wonder increased till the great orb peeped over the line of hills, and we drew a breath of relief. In a few minutes the shadows crept up the mountain side and the whole scene was bathed in the pale light of a winter moon.

Arrived at Peshawur we drove in the steely grey of a real winter's morning to the Travellers' Bungalow, the only house of entertainment in the place. The road was hard and crisp and crackled under the wheels of our "Shigram." A grass plot in front of the Travellers' Bungalow was white with frost, and snow crowned the distant hills. Consulting the Bungalow *khansamah* we found that the wisest course here was to charter an open carriage by the day. This we did, and, having breakfasted, started off to explore the city, which nearly a century ago the Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone reached after a toilsome march through the deserts of Bikaneer on his mission to the "King of Caubool."

The main streets are wide and well kept, but the buildings look as if they had all been built by contract and run up in a violent hurry. They are of one unvarying pattern and are very unstable, at least in appearance. Houses of two, three and four stories, great square blocks, are built in a light frame-work of wood, filled in with unfaced brick, cemented with mud-coloured mortar. The wood-work of the superior houses is handsomely carved, but no attempt is made at stucco or stone ornamentation. The explanation of these frail-looking structures, as it was given to us, is that this part of the country is subject to slight but frequent shocks of earthquake and the people have learnt by generations of experience that the light wood and brick work gives to the shock and remains standing, while structures of firmer and less yielding build would be rent from basement to roof.

A striking feature of the town is the number of eating-houses and the absence of liquor-shops. In the Hindu towns we have this order reversed ; not that in the latter liquor-shops are conspicuously numerous, but Peshawur is almost exclusively Mahomedan and the followers of the Prophet are forbidden to take wine, while among Hindus a similar prohibition only applies to certain castes. In Hindu towns the absence of public eating-houses is due, of course, to Hindus being prohibited by caste restrictions from eating or mingling together indiscriminately. Food seemed to be very cheap. At one shop we watched a man buy for one anna—little more than a penny—two large cakes of unleavened bread and a leaf full of curry. In what we should call the green-grocer's and fruiterer's shop, there were mountains of succulent cauliflowers, cabbages and turnips, side by side with heaps of apples and oranges. We saw excellent bamboo wicker-work, leather-work of every description, as in use among

the people, handsome Peshawur pottery, furs and sables, and the well-known *posteen* of Afghanistan displayed in the shop windows, side by side with wares from Manchester. Having seen the exterior of the shops, we were anxious to make acquaintance with some interiors. Our first purchases were two handsome spears, the shaft twelve feet long and well balanced, of tough pliant bamboo curiously lacquered. At a shop, in which table-covers, curtains and drapery of different descriptions are made of the celebrated Peshawur lac-work, we stayed for some little time watching the process. On a ground of thin red, blue or black cotton stuff, designs and borders are worked, in a compound of melted shellac mixed with bronze or silver dust, and the effect is exceedingly handsome. We have seen a drawing-room most effectively draped entirely with curtains of this stuff. The operator sits on the floor with the cloth spread across his knees. On a dish beside him is a daub of the bronze or silver preparation, into which, from time to time, he dips a pointed steel pencil; on the cloth before him no design is traced nor are there any lines to guide his pencil, but very rapidly and with great dexterity he makes an ornamental border, running parallel with the sides, and in the centre of the cloth, flowers, birds and other fanciful designs follow with wonderful accuracy.

From this place we visited a large warehouse, one of the best in the town. The exterior was very unpretentious, but the collection of articles within almost entitled the place to be called an emporium of Central Asian goods. Leaving our carriage in the main street and following a guide down a long narrow alley, we stopped before a small and very modest doorway and entering found ourselves in an unexpectedly spacious apartment filled with furs, sables, carpets from Persia, needle-work and embroidery from Samarkhand and other numerous articles from Persia, Cen-

tral Asia and Afghanistan. The merchant—I was almost writing our host—a tall, good looking, Bokharan, with olive complexion and tawny beard ushered us courteously in and conducted us to a couch draped with the skins, most perfectly preserved, of the silver fox and snow leopard. Then handing us a box of luscious grapes from the vineyards of Kandahar, he proceeded to spread out fur rugs, carpets, shawls, embroidery, curtains and a number of other beautiful things. We protest we are giving a great deal of trouble and may possibly not buy at all. What matter, our "slave" only wanted us to honor him by looking; if his *kismet* was good, we would buy, if not, it was his fate. "Who can resist the will of Allah!" He talked and displayed his wares, telling where this or that came from, of the long weary caravan journey and of the risk from robbers through wild country. He spoke Hindustani perfectly and with a full rich accent. The visit ended in our buying some handsome furs and curtains, proving that our courteous friend's *kismet* was good. Among the former we thought the silver fox, snow leopard and white bear carried off the palm. There were, too, several handsomely made up rugs, one specially so, consisting of silver grey wolf skin forming a centre, set in black Bokharan lamb skins. Having thoroughly ransacked the shop, if such a commonplace term can be applied to a very Alladin's cave of treasures, our courteous dealer bowed us to the door with many civil speeches.

XVII.

THE next day we left for Khairabad, a railway station on the Indus, about two miles from the town of Attock. The town stands on the slope of a hill immediately under the fort of the same name, which was built by the Emperor Akbar in 1581, to defend the passage of the river. The most conspicuous objects now are a fine English Church and the barracks of a regiment of British Infantry and a battery of Artillery. The magnificent bridge over the river, built for both railway and road traffic, was opened in 1883, and renders the presence of any considerable body of troops unnecessary. The two approaches to the bridge are guarded by block houses which were originally held by infantry, but are now in the hands of armed police. Apropos of the church, which is unusually large and imposing for this small place, the story runs that when Sir Donald MacLeod was Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, he heard an old tribal chieftain, on the occasion of the signing of some articles, remark to another: "These people are great and brave, but how can we trust them? They are *be-imahn*, they have no places of worship even in their towns." To this remark most of the big churches in the Punjab are said to owe their origin. So the story goes. I cannot vouch for its accuracy, but the

Mahomedans, of all Asiatics, are perhaps the most deeply religious, and *be-imahn* (without faith) is with them a very severe term of reproach.

Reaching Khairabad at about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, we started off at once on foot to see the bridge. On our journey up we had already crossed the magnificent bridges over the Ravi, the Chenab and the Jhelum, but as the Indus offered the last and most serious obstacle to the progress of the railway towards the North-Western frontier, and as at this point most of the invading armies, advancing through the Khyber Pass, entered India, we were anxious to see and examine the bridge and, if possible, get a photograph. The bridge over the Jhelum is 9,080 feet from bank to bank of the river; the longest bridge yet constructed in India. Those over the Ravi and Chenab are built on the same principle, but are shorter. These bridges are low till the natural bed of the river is reached. Great allowance has had to be made for floods on the left bank of the river towards which the country slopes.

The Attock Bridge, which had to be built under different conditions, merits a separate description. Near Attock the Indus flows through a narrow gorge between high rugged hills and the difficulties of construction were heightened by the difficult approaches to the river. The first operations began with a survey in the winter of 1878-79 and the site near Attock was fixed upon. Our photograph taken from the right bank of the river gives some idea of the height of the bridge, which crosses the ravine at one of the deepest parts of the river. There are five spans, three of 250 feet and two of 200 feet. The two large spans cross the ordinary cold weather channel and the height of the girders are 117 feet above the ordinary level of the river, the total measurement across being about 1,400 feet. The approaches are through tunnels and deep cuttings among the hills and the block houses

To describe the streets on this occasion would require a more graphic pen than ours. Suffice it to say that we drove at the rate of about half a mile an hour through dense crowds of picturesque ruffians in every conceivable garb, from all parts of Afghanistan, Persia and Central Asia. The types of faces and dress were so numerous, that, aided by a friend, we proceeded to take copious notes with the following result: In the great surging crowd before us, were people from Bokhara, Sammerkund, Khokand, Khiva, Herat, Kashgar, Yarkhund, Kafferistan, Cashmere, Persia, Afghanistan and Balkh, and among the languages spoken in the city at the time were Persian, and dialects of Persian, Pushtoo, Hindustani, Punjabi, English, Cashmeri, Hindi, and Arabic.

Our attention was attracted every now and then by an eminently handsome face, with ruddy fair skin, blue eyes and curly brown beard, or again by a very evil face with lowering eyes and unkempt locks. There were, too, not a few gentle, sorrowful-looking faces of the type usually ascribed to the Saviour, which from the way the beard and hair are worn carry one back to the sacred pictures of childhood. Peshawur is a kind of *refugium peccatorum* for Central Asia and Afghanistan, and while it more often perhaps shelters many a *badmash*, who has fled his country for his country's good, it often affords a refuge to those who have fled from oppression of one kind or another. The huge Khafilas, too, which come down from Afghanistan with the produce of Central Asia—furs, wools, dried fruits, &c., &c.—add their quota to swell the throng of strangers in the city. Nearly all looked happy and nearly all were busy munching.

Peripatetic vendors of sugarcane cut into little cylinders, sweets and tempting comestibles of sorts, drove a brisk trade. There were the cries of "*paisa paisa*"—the "all-a-penny" of a similar gathering in England—

while, at various coigns of vantage, stalls covered with *chuppatis* and savoury *cabobs* were in great demand, attention being invited by "*Gharma-gharm*" ("all-hot, all-hot"). There were beggars, too, of every age and degree. Sturdy evil-eyed fakirs with wild unkempt locks thrust out their grimy paws and demanded alms in Allah's name. Old women and little boys and girls, European gipsies in all but dress—begged with pleading glances for "*ek paisa, sahib.*" We could not resist these last appeals and magnanimously distributed four annas worth of small coppers. It went a long way, too, and gave considerable satisfaction apparently to the recipients, but the evil-eyed fakir got none of our coppers, scowled he never so fiercely.

Outside of the town merry-go-rounds were in full swing, but we were greatly disappointed at missing a tent-pegging competition, which had just been concluded. The competitors, who were then leaving, looked, with their long spears, sufficiently picturesque to have given the sport a more than ordinary charm. Numbers of Sikh and Pathan sepoys in undress uniform and mounted men of the Guides Corps were out holiday making, but their British brother-soldier was conspicuous by his absence. No European soldier is allowed into the town on leave, as among these turbulent elements a rough jest or ill-chosen expletive would certainly lead to quarrels and, perhaps, bloodshed. As it was, the scene was most orderly. Not one of the crowd carried arms, and we were told that all new arrivals, Charbardars with Khafilas and others, are at once disarmed and stacks of weapons are to be seen at one of the frontier outposts.

The streets, with their ever-moving crowds, had such a fascination for us that we spent the time till dark driving in and out among the throng. Walking was out of the question. We should probably have had rather a rough time had we tried.

XVIII.

THE next morning we were up betimes and 8 o'clock saw us fairly on our way to Jamrud. I should mention that, on our return from the fair the previous evening, we found two European gentlemen awaiting us, anxious to know if they might join our party on the morrow. We were only too glad to have their company and gave a cordial invitation, especially as they had been referred to us by Colonel Warburton. The road to Jamrud lies through a stony plain devoid of scenery. The only object of interest on the way is the Fort of Hari Singh, known locally as *Hari Singh ka Buraj*. The name of Hari Singh is familiar to all in the Punjab as that of Ranjit's great General.

The drive through the keen morning air was, if very cold, invigorating and bracing, and our newly-found friends, old residents of the Punjab, beguiled the way with interesting anecdotes of the country and the people. Much has been done by Government in the Punjab during the years of British occupation and much is now being done under a vigorous administration. The conditions of life there find no parallel in any other part of India; the difference, indeed, is so very marked that it is apparent to the most ordinary observer. The people are for the most

part composed of harder races, of "a more eager and energetic character," leading them to revenge, turbulence and crime, unless directed into a proper channel. The old fighting clans have not yet taken quite kindly to education or our system of right before might. They hold in supreme contempt the softer races of the lower provinces, who, owing to their superior education, occupy many of the magisterial offices under the Government of the Punjab, and having the bulk of the criminal work to dispose of are, it is said, too eager to acquit or pass inadequate sentences.

Arrived at Jamrud, I delivered my credentials to the "Senior Officer, Khyber Rifles." Major Aslam Khan, Commandant of the Khyber Rifles, was away on duty elsewhere, but we were received by an Afridi gentleman, of soldierly appearance, dressed in the ordinary khakee uniform of a British officer, over which he wore loosely an English military great-coat, with captain's badges on the shoulder-straps. We were first taken over the "*Sipahi ka Sarai*"—the barracks of the sepoys—of the Khyber Rifles quartered at Jamrud. A couple of companies were at drill on the maidan in front of the Sarai and one company under a native officer was drawn up at the gate and came to the "shoulder arms" as we passed through.

The Khyber Rifles are composed almost exclusively of Afridis—fine-looking men, all above the English standard of middle height, broad-shouldered and of a ruddy brown complexion. The Border Militia, to which the corps belongs, gives employment to a large number of men of the turbulent border tribes and keeps them out of mischief. Writing of these tribes in 1808 in the account of his "Mission to the Court of the King of Caubool," the Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone

remarks : " We had approached a little ruined tower in the " mouth of the valley and discovered a great many armed " Khyberese sitting on the hills looking wistfully at the " camels passing." * * * * We saw many of these " marauders in the course of our march, but our baggage " was too well guarded to allow of their attacking it." Besides a great deal more on the lawlessness of the tribes, Mr. Elphinstone quotes the instance of an Armenian on his way to Cabul who was so terrified by what he heard at Peshawur of the fierceness of the Khyberese that he went round by Multan, a journey of nine weeks, rather than venture into their haunts. As a proof of the successful manner in which the Khyber tribes are managed now, we quote from the *Civil and Military Gazette* an incident which occurred some weeks before our visit to the Pass : " In December, Colonel Warburton, Political Officer in " charge of the Khyber, Captain Macdonald, R.E., and " Major Aslam Khan, Commandant of the Khyber Levies, " paid a visit to Taggan and Tangi to see if the water- " supply of Jamrud could be improved. The Kuki " Khel, who have a bad reputation on the border, sent " elders to meet them in the most friendly manner, " some three hundred men turning out as a voluntary " escort. * * * * The Kuki Khel men had just " left them when a shot was fired from a hill at some " 1,500 yards distance. The range was, of course, too great " for any harm to be done. The culprit was not captured " at the time, but it was discovered that he was an outlaw " living in a Kadham village—an Alsatia of the border— " and he was very promptly dealt with. The Kuki Khel " *jirga* burned down his house and inflicted a fine of Rs. " 1,000 on one of the tribal elders, whose son had joined " him in his adventure. The fine was a reality as the " money was brought into the Jamrud Fort." Having inspected the Sarai, where a number of stalwart fellows

were lounging about in undress, we left for the Pass accompanied by the Afridi officer and two mounted men of the corps.

This escort at first seemed rather slender, seeing that the hills afford cover to unruly characters of all kinds, but as we advanced we found every hillock, every coign of vantage close to the road and far away occupied by double sentries of the Khyber Rifles, while at every three or four miles we passed a regular fortified post, each held by from twenty to thirty men. On each of several high hills, too, our attention was drawn to two solitary figures silhouetted against the sky. The effect, if re-assuring in one way, was weird and made us feel that we were penetrating into a dangerous land, where life and property were not always safe. It should be explained that all these preparations* were not made merely for our party. Tuesdays and Fridays are the only two days in the week on which the Pass is open to caravans between India and Afghanistan, and great care is taken to prevent any mishap. Our visit was paid on a Tuesday, as we had been told leaving Lahore to time our visit for one of these days. The escort which rides with the visitors is, I should imagine, as much to guard them from the caravan people as from the wild denizens of the Khyber Hills. About midway between Jamrud and Ali Musjid, we passed through a caravan, extending for over a mile, and a more ragged, dirty, travel-begrimed, evil looking lot it would be difficult to meet in any other part of the world. The loads were carried solely by camels, some the tall slim camels of the Punjab, but, for the most part, the huge hairy Bactrian monsters—perfect towers of strength. The human part of the *khaifah* consisted principally of Persians and men from Central Asia, all bronzed bearded savages, looking capable of anything from petty larceny to murder. They were all unarmed, their arms having been given up on the

down journey, at Lundi Kotal. The *khafilah* consisted principally of iron-work for a small tram or railway and was all consigned to the Amir of Afghanistan. We passed over the same ground, probably, as the invading armies from the time of Alexander to that of Nadir Shah. The road, now a grand macadamised highway, winds in and out and round and through a perfect labyrinth of the wildest and most desolate looking hills and valleys. Hardly a scrap of vegetation relieves the sameness of the barren slopes, only an occasional hard gnarled knotted shrub grows in an occasional sheltered spot, a fitting child of the desolate lonely hills, which nature is trying to level in the constant disintegration that is going on. Shedding an everchanging crop of stone, the hills seem in a fair way to work their own dissolution. Only one spot of verdure did we see in our journey of eleven miles—nothing but bare forbidding hill and valley—and it is easy to understand how the inhabitants of this inhospitable region, with their struggle with nature on the one hand and hereditary foes on the other, should grow up a hardy reckless race, preying on each other and on the more fertile country below. It was 1 o'clock before we reached the foot of the hill, on which the fort of Ali Musjid stands, and spreading the contents of our tiffin basket on a narrow strip of grassy sward that lines the bank of a purling brook—a perfect oasis in this wilderness of rock—we peacefully lunched beneath the frowning heights, the witnesses of many a deed of blood. The hill on which the fort is built stands by itself at the end of a valley, and is completely dominated by hills, twice its height, on three sides. These are accessible from the Peshawur Valley by a pass, which was used in the last Afghan War, so that to make the fort at all tenable the surrounding heights must be strongly occupied. Our photograph, which was taken from the Peshawur (as opposed to the Afghan) side of the Pass, gives a fair idea of the hill

and the fort itself, but it was impossible to bring in the surrounding hills so as to give an accurate idea of the position.

After tiffin we climbed the hill and explored the fort which is now quite deserted. A few empty "L. G. Bass" bottles, however, told of a recent "British occupation." On descending to the place where our conveyances had been left, we found a swarm of caravan savages round a wretched camel that had sunk beneath its load, busy in their own gentle fashion in trying to make the camel stand up.

They hooted and yelled like so many fiends, belabouring the wretched animal with sticks one moment and the next trying to lift it on to its feet by sheer force. All was of no avail. The camel simply looked appealingly round and groaned and bellowed as only a camel can. One little urchin, about six years of age, stood calmly in front and as the camel opened its capacious jaws to bellow, he, with accurate aim, pelted in pebbles—on principle, as it afterwards appeared, for all efforts, gentle and otherwise, principally otherwise, having failed, the owner gathered a handful of stones and earth, and without the slightest appearance of anger dashed it into the camel's mouth. It seemed as if this would have the desired effect, for, ceasing perforce to roar, the poor brute made one spasmodic effort to rise, only to sink back in helpless agony. We left, powerless to interfere, just as they were proceeding to unload the camel.

Returning to Jamrud we took a photograph of the Fort. I suggested to our friend, the Afridi officer, to look through the camera, and the look of surprise on his face when he withdrew his head and said, "*sub ulla hai*" (it's all upside down) was quite a study. We looked through the Fort, which is a model of neatness and order, and the photograph of this important frontier fort, rather out of the tourist's beaten track, may possibly be of more than ordinary interest.

XIX.

THE next evening at 8-15 we left Peshawur for Amritsar, the religious capital of the Sikhs, and arrived there the following evening. During our short stay we put up at the "Railway Hotel" close to the station, and the morning after our arrival visited the schools—boys' and girls'—of the Church Mission Society, which seems to be doing a splendid work, if not in proselytising, certainly in the spread of education and civilization. From here we drove to the Golden Temple, the great sight of Amritsar. The temple is a picturesque domed building on a marble platform in the centre of a fine sheet of water, "the Pool of Immortality," from which the city takes its name. Amritsar was founded in 1574 by Ram Das, High Priest of the Sikhs, during the reign of the Moghul Emperor Akbar, and was for long the scene of the great yearly meeting of the Sikh clans. The temple is held in especial reverence and priests are in attendance night and day. The Sikhs were originally an inoffensive, religious people, who were forced by the persecutions of the Emperors Aurangzebe and Bahadur Shah, early in the eighteenth century, to unite and form a great military confederation for the purposes of defence—a confederation which eventually developed into a powerful State. After various vicissitudes, during a period of about thirty years, the confederation had become so formidable that, out of an assembly called together at Amritsar in 1763, an

army of 40,000 was able to take the field. From this time may be said to date the real independence of the Sikhs as a nation, but there was an element of Government wanting to complete their unity, which was supplied a generation later by the rise of Ranjit Singh, by whom the confederation was converted into the nation of the Sikhs with Ranjit Singh as Rajah. Their absorption into the British Empire by the annexation of the Punjab in 1849 has already been described.

The domes and cupolas of the celebrated temple, covered with sheets of gilded copper, glittered in the morning sun, and recalled the writer's first view of the Golden Mosque at Kasmayne on the Tigris. Having exchanged our boots for cloth slippers we passed under a handsome gateway and across a causeway of white marble into the temple. Here a sight awaited us, which was almost pathetic in its silly simplicity. In the centre hall a big bearded Sikh of dignified appearance sat cross-legged on a rug, solemnly waving a *chaori* of yak's tails over a pile of books covered with cloth of gold, while on one side three musicians kept up a perpetual din. The books consist of the sacred writings of Nanak, the founder of the Sikh religion towards the end of the fifteenth century, and of one of his successors, Guru Govind Singh. These books are voluminous and are written in an archaic Indian vernacular older than Punjabi or Hindi. They are considered very sacred and the "worship" we saw goes on during twenty-two of the twenty-four hours of the day, the "adoration" ceasing only during the mystic hours, from 12 midnight to 2 A.M. We visited a large carpet and shawl manufactory, where all the operatives are Cashmereg. The work turned out is exquisite and, we were told, finds a large sale in Europe. We were only one clear day in Amritsar and saw as much as was possible of the town in that short time. The bazaars are large and wealthy, and we spent a considerable time in them.

XX.

LEAVING Amritsar at 7-45 P.M. by rail, we reached Agra at about 9 P.M. the next day. Once more we are in the region of guides and tourists. The first information we received on alighting at the Agra Railway Station was that the Dák Bangalow was full and that there were 45 people at Laurie's Hotel ; but that by great good luck one room was vacant at the latter, in which we could double up for the night and trust that on the morrow another room would be vacated. Driving from the railway we heard a warning cough from some one seated at the back of our *shigram*. A head was thrust slowly in and a timid insinuating voice said, "I am a guide, Sar. Will show all "sights of Agra," and the sights were run off in parrot wise. We closed with this "Fergusson" on the spot, and agreed to begin our tour of inspection early the next morning. Our first visit, contrary to anticipation, as the Taj was uppermost in our minds, was to Secundra, the last resting place of the Great Akbar. We entered a garden through a handsome arched gateway, and, crossing a stone causeway raised about ten feet above the garden grounds, saw before us Akbar's tomb—a magnificent four-storied building crowned with kiosk and cupola. In the centre hall of the building, under a domed roof, is the marble sarcophagus.

This hall was originally ornamented with designs in blue and gold, now almost obliterated, but some idea of the beauty of the original ornamentation may be formed from a small piece in an ante-chamber, which was restored prior to the Prince of Wales' visit in 1875, to give the Royal visitor an idea of the former beauty of the interior. In side chambers to the right and left of the main hall, are the tombs of Akbar and of Jehangir's daughters, in white marble, beautifully traced in relief. Ascending to the roof we obtained a fine view of the city and of the Jumna, while, forming a distant suburb, the houses of the European residents nestle among trees of every shade of green. From our lofty position we could see that the mausoleum stands in the centre of a square walled enclosure pierced by four great gateways. Over the principal entrance gate is the Nobat-Khana, or music-house, an ornamental structure in the modern Hindu style of architecture. The "answer" to this gate, on the opposite side of the grounds, was some years ago struck by lightning, and is now a heap of ruins. In the centre of the flat roof is a marble cenotaph of the original tomb below, inscribed with the ninety-nine Arabic names of God. At the head of the tomb, a few feet away, is a marble pedestal on which our guide tells us the Koh-i-Nur rested before it was carried away by Nadir Shah. From the roof the tomb of Miriam, Akbar's Christian wife, was pointed out at some little distance and outside the walled enclosure. Miriam's tomb possesses no special architectural beauty, but is now by a strange coincidence a Christian Orphanage. We were shown over the orphanage later on by the courteous head-master, a Native Christian. There are now about 120 boys in the Orphanage and the branches of education include English up to the Government grant-in-aid standard, printing and carpentry.

Two blind boys read passages from the Urdu Scripture to us by means of the raised letter system, and the elder boy was wonderfully proficient. The Orphanage contains a strange creature known as the "Wolf-boy," though now about twenty-six years of age. The story, from which he derives his name, I give in extenso from a pamphlet on the rise and progress of the Orphanage. "On February 4, 1867, "he was sent to the Superintendent of the Orphanage by "the Magistrate of Bulandshahar, with the statement that he "had been taken out of a wolf's hole or den. Some natives, "it turned out on inquiry, had been travelling by some "unfrequented part of the jungle in the Bulandshahar dis- "trict and had been surprised to see a small boy of 5 or 6 "years of age crawling about on hands and feet. On "drawing near to see this strange sight, they were sur- "prised to see the boy disappear quickly within the inte- "rior of a large hole, which on close inspection turned out "to be the dwelling place of some wild beast. Finding "that all efforts to unearth the boy were fruitless, and "fearing to venture in after him, they set off to report to "the Magistrate of Bulandshahar. This gentleman, on "hearing their story, despatched messengers to the spot "with instructions to light a fire at the mouth of the cave, so "as to force out the occupant of the hole by means of the "smoke. This was done, and on the blinding and choking "fumes of the smoke making their way into the furthest "corner of the hole, a fine snarling she-wolf sprang forth "with a bound and, after scattering the by-standers in "terror, rushed off. A moment later the boy, too, came "forth and fell an easy captive. On conveying him to the "Magistrate, the boy was found to be speechless, imbecile "and as near an approach to the lower animals as a human "creature can possibly be. Vegetable food was offered "him, but this he refused, and it was only when meat was

"placed before him that he would eat. Finding it impossible to make the boy rational, the Magistrate sent him to Secundra, with the request that he might be allowed an asylum there. He at first was an object of curiosity and drew a number of visitors to the Orphanage, European and Native. These he astonished by his animal propensity for raw meat and the wolf-like way in which he crawled about. A short stay in the Orphanage taught him to walk upright and to eat vegetable food. Clothes, too, which at first he showed an unconquerable dislike to and would tear to shreds, he was finally induced to wear." He is a strange haggard looking creature, perfectly imbecile, unable to articulate, and when we saw him was crouching under a tree apparently oblivious of all around him. Having heard that he was fond of tobacco we gave him a cigarette, which he lit and sucked with ecstasy.

XXI.

THE Taj Mahal built in the latter half of the seventeenth century by the Emperor Shah Jehan as a mausoleum of his wife, Mumtaz-i-Mahal (exalted of the palace), is more widely known, perhaps, simply as "The Taj." Like the tomb of Akbar at Secundra, it stands in a large walled enclosure of red sand-stone in a cool and shady garden. Bernier classes it as one of the wonders of the world, with which the misshapen mass of the Pyramids should not be compared. Other well-known writers have gone into rhapsodies over the exquisite beauty of the Taj, and probably no traveller visits India without looking feverishly forward to the time when he shall see the Taj at Agra. The Taj is perhaps one of the few things in this world which surpasses in reality all one's preconceived impressions.

The road from the Cantonment is lined on either side with high trees, and approaching the Taj one catches only an occasional passing glimpse of a snow-white dome or minaret. Passing under the portals of a magnificent gateway, the Taj bursts as a surprise upon the visitor in all its spotless splendour—a pearl of exquisite beauty gleaming in a setting of clear blue sky seen through a vista of bright green foliage mingled with the sombre hue of an

avenue of cypress. We stood beneath the mighty archway, trying to think in poetry, when our reverie was suddenly interrupted by a hoary-headed brigand, toothless, but with a tongue of exceeding volubility, offering to show us the best view. Carried away by the impetuosity of the attack, we followed our self-elected guide away up flights of steps, through dark passages, till we found ourselves on a terrace above the gateway and commanding a most comprehensive view of the Taj and the surrounding gardens. From this elevation the angles and corners of the pretty flower-beds, lining the approach to the Taj, were softened into one harmonious whole. Arches of trellis-work covered with the *Bougainvillea* and the *Bignonia Venusta* in full flower. The latter, like a shower of gold, served to brighten the sombre hues of the avenue, while the ornamental sheets of water on either side of the paved approach glistened in the sunlight like a mirror. While we were gazing enraptured at the scene before us, our aged guide was improving the shining hour with "Fergusson." Evidently under the impression that I did not understand Hindustani, he rated Fergusson soundly: What did he know about the Taj; what did he mean by posing as a guide and taking the bread out of legitimate guides' mouths; he would turn him out of the place; and much more to the same effect. I had at last to go to "Fergusson's" rescue and convinced our aged friend that I did know a little of what was going on, though it was all in his own native tongue. The infinite worry that visitors are put to at every show place greatly takes away from the pleasure of the visit. Before our sight-seeing was well begun we felt that we were machines being led about for the distribution of *backsheesh*, and the word grew simply hateful. In some cases the *demand* is made in the most open manner; in others a fellow sneaks up with a

small bunch of flowers or a couple of unripe oranges on a leaf and presents them with a profound *salaam*. If you pretend to misunderstand this delicate attention, he follows you like a shadow, making you feel a culprit. All silent reproach failing, he asks more in sorrow than in anger if he is to have no *inâm* (present). His offering has been accepted and you are the light of the world, and charity is a sacrifice of sweet savour to Allah whose power is great. We have not been able to decide whether this sickening thief or the bold brigand is the more objectionable. But our moral courage was weak and we always paid. One does not begrudge a douceur decently earned ; but this eternal black-mail is most trying. We would willingly have paid double at the gate to be allowed to wander about inside at our own sweet will. But we pass on to the Taj along the paved way, down the cypress avenue, amid flowering shrubs, under the trellis arches where the shower of gold from the *Bignonia Venusta* brushes us as we pass, and, ascending a flight of marble steps, cross the wide marble platform and enter the mausoleum. We are hardly within the door-way of the upper apartment, our eyes have not become accustomed to the dim light of the interior, when a fat *mullah* in a loud unctuous voice announces that this is the tomb of the great Shah Jahan, that of his great consort. We are about to pass further into the chamber, when we are peremptorily halted. Bringing the palm of his fat paw down with a smack on the polished surface of the marble tomb, he rakes forward a few rupees, put there, no doubt, as victims are seen approaching, and rolls out "This is where distinguished visitors make their offerings," with much more about there being a hundred *mullahs* to feed, *et cetera*. In a shamefaced way we laid some silver on each tomb, and our oily friend then obsequiously passed us on to an acolite, who held a lamp

for us to examine the beautiful tracing of a white marble screen, inlaid with black marble, jasper and agate, which encloses the tombs, and promptly demanded a fee for the light. Beautiful as the place is, and much as there is to see, we were glad to escape and, passing out, were conducted through a marble tunnel in the plinth to the vault below, where the real tombs cover the remains of Shah Jehan and his wife. Those above are cenotaphs, and are supposed to have been made at a later date. We entered a gloomy chamber, heavy with the odour of incense, and a venerable *mullah* in attendance picked a few flowers off the tombs, and bestowing on us a benediction asked us to bestow the usual *backsheesh*. We leave the Taj sadder, if wiser, and return to the hotel in rather an irritable frame of mind. Exquisitely beautiful as the Taj and its surroundings are, it is almost wholly associated in our minds with the greedy importunities of the so-called priests. We could not but be impressed by the seeming sanctity of some of the shrines and mausoleums we saw. Even as works of art, the intangible presence of a great mind is felt; but for the most part it is almost impossible, under the annoyance one is subjected to, to admire anything but the mere mechanical beauty of the places.

We spent the afternoon in driving about the city and bazaar, but have attempted to keep no notes of the sights common to all Indian towns, and which are too familiar to us to attract even passing attention. No doubt, the traveller from Europe or America would be amused to see the fat shop-keeper squatting complacently on the roadside in front of his shop, while the barber squats besides and operates on his head and eyebrows, besides performing other mystic rites, which form no part of the European toilet. This goes on in a busy thoroughfare, while laden donkeys, camels and busy pedestrians—I was going to

say—hurry by, but in the East we do not hurry ~~the~~
life, we saunter.

We began the following day with a visit to the Central Jail, which is said to be one of the finest in India, but were denied admission by an over-zealous jailor, as we had come unprovided with passes from the Superintendent. We had been told by the principal civil authority that our cards would be sufficient passport, as they had been everywhere else, and, unfortunately, we had no time later on to renew the visit. After breakfast we drove to the Fort—colossal in its grandeur. Passing over a draw-bridge and under a magnificent archway, we ascended a paved way past a common, on which a number of English soldiers, some *bare-headed* under a noonday sun, were playing cricket. When will people learn that a tropical sun, though not so scorching in the winter, is just as fatal to the unprotected European cranium as in the summer months? We stopped opposite the pearl mosque, and, ascending a flight of steps, were dazzled by the brilliant whiteness of a great square flagged with marble and of the lovely pearl mosque, all of the same dazzling material. Inside the mosque beautifully carved marble arches (each pillar formed of a single slab) divide the nave into seven open apartments and off the centre one, in a domed recess, let into the floor beside the pulpit, are three white marble flags divided from each other by inlaid strips of black marble forming, as it were, three open pews. These, we were told, were used at prayer time by the Emperor, the Chief Priest and the Wazir, the *mullah* occupying the centre flag and the Emperor and the Wazir kneeling on his right and left hand, respectively. On either side of the nave, screened from the gaze of other worshippers by a close trellis-work of marble, are two small side chapels, in which the females of the royal household performed their

devotions. Ascending to the roof of the mosque by a narrow stone staircase, a glorious view burst upon us. During the night heavy rain had washed the dust from gilded spire and minaret, from marble dome and kiosk, from green trees and the white flat-roofed houses of the city, and the scene before us was fair to look upon. Following the course of the Jumna from the bridge of boats, which dates from the time of Akbar, past the grand Railway Bridge and past the tomb of Itmad-ud-Dowlah on the opposite bank, our gaze rests on the Taj, now sharing with the surrounding country a renewed glory in the brilliant sunshine. Leaving the Jumna and passing over the English cantonment, which seems to rest in a very forest of trees, past the steeple of the Catholic Church, which towers high, above all its surroundings, beyond the city, even on the edge of the horizon, with only a background of azure sky, we see the white domes of Secundra, the last resting-place of Akbar. At our feet lie the grand buildings of Akbar's palace and round about the lofty battlemented walls and massive bastions of the Fort. The pearl mosque is crowned with three marble domes, and round the parapet walls of the roof, eleven beautiful marble kiosks are supported on pillars of the same material. After lingering in each kiosk till our gaze was almost sated with the grand panorama before us, and till the matter-of-fact "Fergusson" alluded gently to the flight of time, we descended, and, passing through lines of old cannons and mortars, entered the Diwan-i-Am, a spacious hall of stucco, in which the Emperor gave public audience. In front is an open square, where the elephants and horses of the Royal stable are said to have been inspected by the Emperor and his satellites. From here we passed into the sacred precincts of the palace itself, and were shown the place in which Aurungzebe imprisoned his father Shah Jehan. We saw the gates

of Somnath, which never probably saw Somnath, and are certainly not made of sandalwood. One might spend days in wandering through the palace, always discovering new beauties, but our time was limited. In the open courtyard on the ramparts of the Fort, in front of the beautiful Dewan-i-Khas, we sat on a raised platform of state, which supported one of Akbar's thrones, and gazed into the depths of the dry moat below, with green parrots and blue pigeons flitting about in mid-air. From here and from various parts of the palace, the Taj was visible, and seemed to follow us from place to place, always presenting new beauties. In the Summum Mahal or Jasmine Palace, workmen were busy supplying vacancies in the marble inlaid work of the walls and pillars, and we stood by watching the work with interest. Our stay in the palace precincts concluded with a visit to the Sis Mahal or Glass Palace, fitted with pipes and cisterns for bathing purposes. It is a vault-like apartment, secluded from the light of day, but a torch carried by an attendant suddenly flared up, disclosing the walls completely inlaid with little mirrors in various fantastic designs. The effect of the torch was magical. We seemed to stand in the centre of a vast hollow gem, sparkling and scintillating in the torch-light. We were sorry to quit the palace and look, perhaps, for the last time, on these glories of a departed race of kings. But we could not refrain from contrasting these useless, if enduring, monuments built at such enormous expenditure of money and human suffering* with the practical monuments of our own time. Agra we thought, on the whole, far more interesting from an architectural and scenic point of view than Delhi.

* Many, if not all, of the monuments of the Mogul Emperors are said to have been built largely by forced labour.

XXII.

FOR Fattehpur-Sikri, a distance of 24 miles, we left early the next day, and drove out over an excellent macadamized road, passing through miles of green wheat and fields of Til. The pretty yellow flowers of the Til shrub (*sesamum orientale*) gives the fields the appearance, in the distance, of green meadows covered with buttercups. The way was long, and the keen sharp air of this January morning chilly. At each change of horses, we alighted from the carriage and stepped briskly out, covering more than a mile before we were overtaken by the carriage. Seated again, we beguiled the way with stories of the Mutiny and in particular of a fight that occurred on this road, and probably on the spot we were then passing over. Long before the minarets of Akbar's great mosque at Fattehpur-Sikri appeared in sight, we had discussed the story of the founding of the place by Akbar in 1569. We had read up the subject, and the true (?) story, because it was afterwards confirmed by the aged *mullah*, who haunts the place and claims lineal descent from the saint, Shaik Selim Shisti, at whose instigation the mosque was built, *is substantially as follows:* Akbar and his Hindu wife, daughter of a Rajah of Rajputana, on one of their numerous peregrinations, camped at the foot of the hill on which

the mosque stands. At this time Akbar had no heir to his greatness, and during the royal visit a son was born to the saint. This precocious child, at the tender age of a few months, inspired by Allah, volunteered to die, declaring in a set speech to his father that the sacrifice would ensure the birth of a son and heir to Akbar. The Fakir's child disappeared and the future Emperor Jehangir appeared on the scene. To understand this miraculous occurrence, it is only necessary to follow the disputes on the subject of succession and the genuineness of putative heirs, which sometimes appear in modern Indian newspapers even unto our own day.

Arrived at Futtehpur-Sikri, we drove through heaps of ruins, almost buried in tangled brush-wood, and rattling over a paved court, drew up at the door of *Beerbhul ka kothi** now used as a guest house, and which had kindly been placed at our disposal for the day by the Collector of Agra. Beerbhul was a man of learning and the great Akbar's Hindu Councillor. From his house, which is a massive red sand-stone edifice, adapted now with glass windows and doors to suit modern European requirements, we passed through the Royal stables, in which one hundred camels are said to have been tethered at a time, to the *Durga*, or grand square, in which stands Akbar's mosque and the tomb of Shaikh Selim. We were accompanied by the aged *mullah*, already mentioned, and his grandson, a youth of about eighteen. Before setting out, the *mullah* insisted on our examining some of his certificates, of which he was very proud. Among a host of others were three, setting forth that this noble scion of the house of Shaikh Selim had been useful at different times in conducting their Royal Highnesses the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Edinburgh, and the Duke of Connaught around Futtehpur-

* The house of Beerbhul.

Sikri. Our guide, who claimed to number eighty hot Indian summers, first pointed out the last resting-place of his father, a plain handsome tomb in white marble, in front of a mausoleum containing rows of tombs of his forefathers, alongside of the magnificent mausoleum of Shaik Selim Shisti, the founder of the family. The old gentleman then retired into the back-ground, leaving the grandson to do the honours in English. This was a pert youth with a smattering of English and a set number of prepared show speeches, such as "I draw your attention to this beautifully marble screen. See how beautifully it is looking from this place." He irritated us to a degree with his mixture of broken English, ignorance and assurance, and we preferred listening to the grand-father's garrulous talk in decent Hindustani.

The mausoleum of the saint is small, but very beautiful. The marble trellis-work, surrounding the inner apartment, is exquisite. Seen at a distance, even of six or eight feet, the marble screens look like pure white lace drawn tightly over the apertures. The screen nearest the head of the tomb is disfigured by bits of coloured rag tied on by devout but childless wives, who have made pilgrimages to the tomb of the saint to implore his mercy on their barrenness, and to judge from his loyal descendant's assurances, their prayers have never passed unheeded. In the centre of the mausoleum under a canopy of wood, inlaid with mother-o'pearl, is the sarcophagus carefully covered. The floor is inlaid in mosaics of white and black marble and jasper. On the tomb lay a few fresh flowers and an odour of quiet repose filled the place. Among verses from the Koran in black marble, inlaid into the white marble walls of the chamber are the names of the four great prophets of Allah—Isalay Salaam, Musalay Salaam, Daodalay Salaam and Mahomed Rasool Alay Salaam—in plain English, Jesus,

Moses, David and Mahomed. At one side of the mausoleum, in an outer enclosure is a tiny tomb in white marble, which is pointed out as the grave of the child who died to make way for Akbar's son. I could not refrain from asking the old *mullah* if he really believed this story. Believe it! Shade of Shaik Selim!!! Did not his sainted ancestor, on whom be peace, write it in a book. It was as true as the holy Koran. Allah Akbar!!

The Jumma Musjid, which consists of seven arched divisions, the almost unvarying pattern, typical of the seven heavens of Islam, was built by Akbar in imitation of the mosque at Mecca. Reaching the centre or principal dome, containing the *kaaba* and pulpit, the old *mullah* ascended the steps, folded his hands before him and with eyes reverently closed, intoned part of the Moslem service in a really fine voice, though slightly quavering with age. The vulgar old showman, athirst for *backsheesh*, was transfigured into the venerable devout man of God and for the moment we were deeply impressed. The old man's voice rose and fell in beautiful cadence, echoing through the domed roof and ending in a sonorous, *Allah hu Akbar*. When we turned away, he to resume his garrulity, and we our vandal sightseeing, the solemn tones seemed still to linger, but the spell was broken. To us it seemed almost impossible to realize that our venerable friend was only going through a performance he was ready to repeat for every succeeding visitor—but so it was.

From the mosque we passed into the grand square and out at the great gateway, a superb structure 180 feet above the basement and four or five hundred feet above the plain. Making our way on to the dome of one of Akbar's Turkish baths, we planted our camera and photographed the gateway. From here we passed again under its lofty portals and ascending numerous

flights of narrow stone steps, emerged on to the top of one of the cupolas, which commands a magnificent view of the country round. We were soon driven from this elevation by a high cold wind that cut through us like a knife, and repairing to *Bcerbhul ka kotee*, we breakfasted preparatory to further explorations. In the vicinity of Bcerbhul's house are most of the other objects of interest. Among them, of special interest to us, is the palace of Jodhbai Rakia Sultana Begum, Akbar's Rajput bride, the reputed mother of Jehangir. This palace is a rectangular building, with a court-yard in the centre, one side being occupied by the Begum's own Hindu Temple.

Close by is the palace of the great polygamist's Christian wife, Miriam, and almost adjoining is, what is called, the children's palace, a very striking red sand-stone building of seven open storeys, each lessening in extent till the whole culminates in a single pavilion. In the distance this building looks like an ordinary Burmese Pagoda. From the topmost storey we obtained a grand view of the country round and of the site of the original town, now marked by the ruins of towers and houses. Away in the distance, on one side is Agra and on the other Bharatpur, with immense stretches of open undulating country intervening, miles of green fields enlivened occasionally by wide patches of the yellow flowered *til* cultivation. The buildings within the citadel, in an unexpected state of preservation, are most imposing and, dwarfing all, rise the kiosks and massive proportions of the great gate*. The little town of Futtahpur-Sikri contains a goodly number of houses, and while we looked down from our lofty perch, people mostly sight-seers were constantly crossing and recrossing the great square in front of the mosque and we almost feel that we are among the haunts

of men, and not in a little out of the way deserted corner. An object that specially attracts attention is a flagged square, like an immense chess-board formed of alternate slabs of white and black marble. In the centre of the square is a raised masonry platform, on which Akbar and his favourite, Beerbhul, are said to have played the Indian game of *Pachisi* with living female figures. Near by is a very peculiarly shaped building, in which Akbar is said to have sat in council with his four ministers, of the North, the South, the East and the West. The palace enclosure contains also a swimming bath, Turkish baths, private and public halls of audience and numerous other buildings, which are interesting either in themselves or from historical associations. Driving back to Agra, a long twenty-four miles, we were both tired, and silence was hardly broken the whole way. We had been on the move all day from early morning and had worked hard to leave as little as possible unexplored in the short time at our disposal.

XXIII.

AT a visit we paid to the Collector the day after our arrival in Agra, Mr. Findlay had kindly interested himself in our movements and as our next destination was Mattra, suggested our going by way of Bharatpur and Deeg, the latter place possessing special interest for a Hindu. From Agra to Bharatpur the journey is performed by rail and the rest of the way by road. It was suggested therefore that I should write to the Political Agent for the State of Bharatpur. This I did and we were grateful on receiving a telegram promptly in reply, to say that dák would be laid for us from Bharatpur to Mattra.

The day after our visit to Futtahpur-Sikri we left Agra by rail at 10 A.M., reaching Bharatpur about midday. We were met at the railway station by an official from his Highness the Maharajah. A very neat open phaeton and pair of capital horses, with postillion in livery was ready for us and a large covered wagon drawn by two camels for our servants and luggage. We left at once for Deeg, a distance of twenty-four miles and changed horses twice on the road. Things seem well managed in this State. The horses provided along the road were in excellent condition, well trained and well driven.

In the fields skirting the road we saw herds of antelope, sometimes within a hundred yards of us and partridges every now and then ran out of road-side bushes, apparently

half-tame. The Mahajun element must be strong in the Bharatpur State, as no one is allowed to shoot without special permission from the Darbar and this, I believe, is not often accorded. The result is serious to the cultivator as the deer multiply rapidly and the large herds feed almost undisturbed on the young crops.

Reaching Deeg at about four o'clock, we were driven at once to the palace which, by kind permission of his Highness, is used during his residence in Bharatpur as a house of entertainment for his guests. We entered a spacious hall, matted with China matting and well furnished with modern European furniture. This hall must have been used in the old days as an open Darbar room, but the outer arches have been filled in with glass windows and doors and the room converted into a handsome modern drawing-room. The palace forms one side of a quadrangle, which is laid out in beautiful parterres interspersed with innumerable fountains. The palace on one side overlooks a broad artificial sheet of water, with steps leading down to the water's edge. Galleries, or oriel windows, project from the upper storey of the palace over the water, and at the moment we looked out, some wild fowl were floating gracefully on the surface as much at home as the domestic swan. In all the beautiful buildings we have seen, such a thing as a broad stair-case in keeping with the rest of the building does not exist. Here again we ascended to our bed-rooms on the upper floor by a flight of narrow, dark steps, our elbows touching the sidewalls and our feet stumbling at every unexpected inequality in the steps. Once up, however, we found ourselves in spacious apartments, fitted in the style of European bed-rooms with bath and dressing-rooms attached. This building is over one hundred years old, but is strangely in keeping with present tastes and in no way like contemporary buildings at other places.

The other three sides of the quadrangle are formed by rows of buildings now apparently disused. The garden occupying the centre is prettily laid out and beautifully kept. A plain white marble arch, about ten feet high, leads on to a paved pathway raised about four feet above the flower beds, and this pathway is crossed at intervals by others, running always at right angles. The beds are all in square basins as it were, the reason probably being that they may keep cool and moist during the scorching summer months, when every unprotected shrub is parched by the hot dry winds. The gardens must contain at least two hundred fountains. At every few feet along ornamental walls and on every other spot, on which a fountain can conveniently play, one is placed. There are besides these, round polished chunam basins, about ten feet in diameter, filled with tiny jets. The water is obtained from a large masonry reservoir built at a height of about fifty feet above the garden, and filled from draw-wells. It is kept full only when the Maharajah is at Deeg, and furnishes all parts of the palace and grounds with a plentiful supply of water.

The morning after our arrival the air was so crisp and bracing that we took a long walk into the country, and, returning at about 11 o'clock, breakfasted and left for Govardhan *en route* for Matra. On arrival at Govardhan, a couple of hours' journey, we left our carriage on the main road and turned off on to a by-path under the guidance of one of the Maharajah's servants, who had been in attendance on us from Bharatpur. We visited several buildings of interest, rising round great masonry tanks with steps down to the water's edge all round. One of the buildings contains the tomb of Buldeo Singh, grandfather of the present Maharajah of Bharatpur. The ceilings are decorated with highly coloured pictures representing principally scenes from Hindu life, but there are

several, types of the time at which they were painted, representing British troops in action against sepoys, in which, of course, the poor British are having a sorry time of it. The pictures are wonderfully fresh, considering that they were painted early in the present century. The contending armies are radiant in full uniform, the Europeans in the tight dress, cross belts and shako of the period, and golden guns are being served by infantry men in the old scarlet coatee. The picture, though hardly true to history, is said to represent a fight that did occur in 1804* between the East India Company's troops, commanded by General Fraser and Colonel Monson, and Holkar's troops. General Fraser was killed, but the English were successful, capturing eighty-seven cannon.

We were left a very short time to contemplate in peace the sights of Govardhan. Govardhan, like every centre of Hinduism, is the licensed home of Brahmin beggary. In less than fifteen minutes, the news of our arrival having spread, we were surrounded by Brahmin beggars clamouring for *backsheesh*. They jostled one another, each screaming out some scrap of information and trying to establish a claim for reward. The din was dreadful. We had literally to keep close together and force our way out of the crowd on to the road, where our carriage awaited us, the human vultures hovering and screaming round us. One tall, young Brahmin, well dressed in muslins, with shaven head bare in old orthodox fashion, and the trident of Vishnu freshly painted on his forehead, was noisy even above the noisy pack. We had not a chance of feeing any one who had given us information previous to the collection of the crowd. *Backsheesh* was demanded in the most peremptory way, and our tall youth kept up a running fire of argument on the obligation of a Hindu Prince to

*The battle of Deeg.

clp holy Brahmins. My companion was as determined as I was not to yield to bullying of this kind, and we kept our resolve; not a copper did we part with at Govardhan. On our masterly retreat from the tomb of Buldeo Singh, I did turn once and harangue the crowd, telling them that their conduct was disgraceful, that they were *demanding* sums after having actually *prevented* our seeing the place. I wound up with the rather useless exhortation to work if they wanted money. It will, of course, be apparent even to people unacquainted with India that Brahmins of this class are distinct from respectable classes of the same community all over India. They are not beggars in the sense the word is understood in European countries. They are strong, lazy, well-fed vagabonds, whom superstition enables to live on the labour of their fellow men—a relic of an ancient religious tyranny once exercised widely over Hindu Princes and people, but which is fast dying out before education and a new civilization. They are only to be met with now in their integrity at the principal religious centres, and are not identified with Brahmins as a class. On our tour money was spent liberally but judiciously at Hindu shrines, but we steadily set our faces against black-mail, and though in this case our carriage was literally mobbed, we drove away, no doubt amid execrations, but with the laugh on our side.

Reaching Nattraj at 4 o'clock in the evening, we started off at once to see the town. Our first visit was to a splendid iron bridge over the Ganges built for railway and ordinary road traffic. Here we obtained a really fine view of the city, extending for nearly two miles along the river bank. Bathing ghats and tiny Hindu shrines and temples line the water's edge, and the bathing ghats at the time were alive with swarms of worshippers and semi-nude bathers. A large picturesque boat, conveying a party of

Europeans, travellers like ourselves no doubt, floated gently down the stream, adding greatly to the general effect. The view of the houses, temples and bathing ghats is imposing, but experience of these cities tells us that distance lends an enchantment, which fades before a nearer acquaintance. We walked along the paved road by the river-side, and had a nearer view of the ghats, which were not as trim and neat as the view from the bridge led us to expect. In the street and on the temples skirting the river, monkeys swarmed in hundreds, and as it seemed to be the custom, we feed a lad selling ground-nuts, to scatter handfuls among the monkeys. They came down on all sides to the accustomed feast, and sat gravely on their haunches picking the nuts up and eating them most daintily. Round the lower steps of the ghats were innumerable turtles, their broad shield-like backs interlaced like the phalanx of the old Roman battalions. We threw nuts among the turtles, some of which lighted on their backs, and several monkeys hopped lightly on, picking them up, while the turtles took not the least notice of the intrusion.

Mattrā, like all holy places, swarms with beggars, some really destitute, but mostly lazy impostors. We visited several of the principal temples, and were agreeably surprised to find the town fairly clean and comparatively free from evil odours. The shops and work places, which all open on to the narrow streets, are very interesting, and we spent the remaining light of day in going through the streets. One Brahmin, who explained that he was a *Choba*, persistently followed us, but as he was respectful and did not clamour for alms, and had broad shoulders and a mild good natured face, we acceded to his reiterated request to be allowed to visit us at the Travellers' Bungalow. Of this visit more anon.

XXIV.

BINDRABUN and its neighbourhood, about eight miles from Mattrā, are the supposed birth-place and cradle of Krishna and are held in great veneration by all devout Hindus, the sect of Vishnavas, followers of Vishnu, in particular. On our way out to Bindrabun, the morning after our arrival in Mattrā, we turned aside for a few minutes to see the Pothera Kun, a large deep reservoir, with beautifully built masonry steps, running round and sloping gently down to the water's edge. Vast shady *Nim* and tamarind trees cast a grateful shade over the water, making this place a cool pleasant retreat in the hot summer months. Off a platform running round the upper edge of the reservoir are rows of little cells, the former abodes of monks but now untenanted. This place is sacred to the god Kunya, whose soiled linen used to be washed in the waters of the tank which are in consequence supposed to have specially cleansing properties for the soiled Hindu soul.

Bindrabun is composed almost exclusively of Hindu temples, in almost every conceivable style and mixture of styles of architecture. The material used in building most of these temples is red sand-stone, but there are several magnificent edifices in pure, white marble. Nothing but temples on all sides—temples

modern and temples ancient, large imposing edifices and small unpretentious brick and mortar shrines. Every spot may be hallowed by an all-pervading essence of Krishna, and one would think at Bindrabun he was sated with places of worship, but the Maharajah of a State in Rajputana is now spending lacs of rupees on the erection of another temple covering many acres of ground. It struck us as rather a pity that the money of a distant State should be wasted on building a temple, where similar places are going to ruin from neglect on all sides. The waste does not stop at the completion of the temple ; there is the endowment and, as a consequence, the encouragement of swarms of unproductive idlers of the class of which we had such unpleasant experience at Govardhan.

A curious anomaly in the present practice of Hinduism among the more dissolute carries us back to the middle ages of Europe, when the wealthy sinner might wipe away all transgressions by the building of a chapel or shrine. To the European traveller, to whom this practice is only a memory of stories read in boyhood of a superstition that long ago faded away before the light of advancing civilization, it is curious to learn that the belief in the efficacy of this kind of atonement is as fresh in India to-day as when Richard of the Lion-heart went forth into the Holy Land to war against the Saracen hosts. Temples and shrines we have innumerable, and if the atonement would only take the form of other more needed institutions, great would be the benefit thereof. The following fable illustrates an example, which it is considered most meritorious to follow, and the scene of the story draws numerous pilgrims every year. In a lonely glen among the rugged hills of the western coast of Bombay, a large temple surrounded by a high walled

enclosure marks the spot where an intermittent spring issues from the rock once a year. The spring is believed to be a subterranean off-shoot from the sacred Ganges, and the waters will cleanse the most hardened sinner from all past offences. In the days of long ago, this spring was a happy, purling brook that flowed merrily on towards the sea ; but one day a lonely, weary wanderer, a man of many sorrows and many sins, dismounted from his hot steed and flung himself down to drink. On his brow were written—

“ Dark tales of many a ruthless deed ;
The ruined maid—the shrine profaned—
Oaths broken—and the threshold stained
With blood of guests !—there written all,
Black as the dimming drops that fall
From the denouncing angel’s pen.”



Ere his lips could touch the pure waters, the stream had ceased to flow—had shrunk within the earth from the pollution of his touch. In a moment like a tornado, the enormity of his life swept over the wretched man. Calling piteously on the offended goddess he vowed that he was unfit to live, that his life’s blood should atone for his sins, and drawing his sword was about to sacrifice himself when a gentle voice bid him hope. The stream again gushed forth, but from that far distant day the waters have always dried up for part of each year. The sequel to this true story is that this man “of many a ruthless deed” built on the scene of his redemption a temple unto the goddess, and there ended his days in the odour of sanctity. Next to building a temple the most meritorious act is to feed and see Brahmins.

No one, who has lived any time in India, will deny that the Hindus are a deeply religious people. It has been

said that "they eat religiously, drink religiously, bathe religiously, dress religiously and sin religiously." Among Hindus, men of all ranks and castes may lead the most disreputable lives, without incurring special odium, provided they adhere strictly to the observance of all religious duties. A man will rise at 4 o'clock on the coldest morning in winter, perform his ablutions, offer up sacrifice and prayers to his idols, anoint his forehead and go forth to break every moral law. In parts of India, it is quite recognised that women born and bred to a profession not considered in other creeds quite compatible with the exercise of religion, shall have their separate temples and separate worship, have their priests in attendance, celebrate feasts and observe fasts and be considered quite godly. These remarks will, no doubt, be open to question, but a Brahmin of considerable attainments, who read this part of my manuscript, says it is perfectly correct. That if he avoid onions and garlic in his food, do not smoke and, of course, avoid all animal food and liquor and strictly adhere to all religious observances and caste-rules, he will be considered a shining light even if his life be ever so immoral. On the other hand, if he neglect religious observances and break even one important law of caste, he will be looked upon as an out-caste, be his life otherwise ever so blameless. In connection with these remarks, generally, Krishná's life* and his exploits among the *gopis* is interesting reading.

We were greatly struck by two temples of red sandstone built about 1570, in honor of a visit paid to Bindrabun by Akbar. The Emperor is said to have been taken blindfold into the inner holy of holies on sacred ground by the attendant priests, and while there had a wondrous vision, in consequence of which he either built or gave his support to the building of the temples. One in particular,

* "Malabartha."

Radha Balajee's temple, reminded us of some of the old Portuguese churches we had seen in old Goa and on the Malabar Coast. Where the high altar would stand in the Christian edifice is some beautiful chaste stone carving; on either side of the nave run galleries, and over the principal entrance door a semicircular gallery occupies the place of the organ loft. The feeling that we were in an old deserted Christian church was strong, and no grotesque idols disfigure the walls to dispel the illusion. Except in an inner apartment, behind the "high altar," out of sight, where a small Hindu shrine is kept up, the building is not used. Our guide, a Brahmin from one of the other temples, informed us, with pride, that this temple was at least three thousand years old, but authentic information slightly contradicted this statement, placing the most ancient temples in Bindrabun about the time of Queen Elizabeth. Some distance from this, and more within the inhabited quarter of the town, is a very handsome temple called, after its founder, Seth Behari Lâl, a wealthy *mahajun* of Lucknow. It is of recent date, but is well worthy a visit, if for no other reason than the contrast which it offers to the musty bat-haunted ruins, among which most of the visitor's time will probably be spent. The facade is composed of a magnificent row of white marble pillars supporting a roofing of marble. Between the arches, rich drapery hangs and graceful marble statuary, very like European workmanship, is displayed before each pillar. Returning to Bindrabun, we found the *Choba* Brahmin, of the previous evening's acquaintance, awaiting us at the Travellers' Bungalow, most anxious that we should see an exhibition of the prowess of the celebrated *Choba* Brahmin wrestlers of Mattrâ. He was a good specimen of the caste himself, broad-shouldered and deep-chested, but as old age was creeping on, he had exchanged the arena for

the temple. Nothing loth we accompanied him, and were well rewarded. We drove out first some distance on to the outskirts of the city, and, leaving our carriage on the road-side, followed our newly-found friend down a narrow alley, and ascending a low hill came to a small open space with a wrestling pit in the centre. Huge Indian clubs and other athletic appliances lay here and there, and a number of men lounged about wrapped in their blankets as the day was cold. Several of them called out that we must remove our shoes, as the ground was holy, so we halted. Our friend offered some explanation however, and an old man of splendid physique, who seemed to be in authority, said "let them come; their shoes are *pavitra*" (holy), and we passed in. All the men about were lithe, well set-up fellows, but the old man who had blessed our shoes dwarfed them all. He came and talked to us, and pointing to the wrestling pit and clubs lying about, said that this was their occupation and their caste, followed from generation to generation, that their only business was to wrestle and perform feats of strength at temple festivals in their youth and in old age to become priests and worshippers. He said that he had been head wrestler at the Court of the deposed Mulharao, Gaekwar of Barodá, but that under the rule of the *Angrejee Sirkar* (English Government) the occupation of men like him was gone. He was very anxious to talk and we were willing to listen, but the wrestling was beginning. The first performance was given by two little fellows, about twelve or thirteen years old, tough as wire and perfectly nude, except for a narrow loin-cloth. They turned and wriggled like eels and tied themselves into knots, while their bare brown arms and legs got tangled in such a way that it was impossible to tell which was which. Neither got the better of the contest and the boys retired in favour of two young men. We

witnessed several well contested struggles. The style of wrestling is entirely different from that of Europe.

The news of our visit had evidently spread, for big broad-shouldered men kept trooping in, and we saw several feats of strength, especially with the Indian clubs. This strange people, peculiar to Mattra, rank as Brahmins and hold most of the sacred offices in the temples of Mattra. For generations they have been trained to athletics from childhood and have developed into a very fine manly race. They do not, as a rule, marry and undertake the cares of domestic life till the age of thirty-five, and then, what one may call the "ring" is given up for the church. I believe they are employed largely at Native Courts, but not to the same extent as formerly, when their presence was indispensable at all sports. They are divided, as far as we could glean, into families or clans, and in the old days, when one Rajah pitted his favourite wrestler against that of another Chief, the men often in their struggle to win broke each other's legs and arms and a wrestling contest, not infrequently, ended in the death of one of the combatants. Now that to a great extent the old occupation is gone, they send their children to school. We were greatly taken with their frank, manly bearing, and fine physique, and gave a liberal donation.

Returning to our carriage we met a gigantic man strolling leisurely along and seeming to fill the breadth of the alley. He was coming to see us and we were fortunate in not to have missed him. He was perhaps not more than six feet two or six feet three, but for size, girth of chest and shoulders and proportion of limbs generally, I do not think he could easily be surpassed. Our friend kept pointing proudly at him, telling us his virtues with a beaming countenance. *Sahib logue* had come and taken his weight and his height and the size of his chest and biceps, and he

had never been beaten by any living wrestler, though he had contended at nearly every Native Court in India. While this panegyric was being pronounced the big man looked benignly down on us and, as our loquacious friend concluded, said "Yes, but I eat a great deal; it is all I am fit for" and walked laughingly away.

XXV.

WE left Mattra the same night for Cawnpur by rail and changed at the Hathras Junction for Cawnpur at the awful hour of midnight. The arrangements for transferring passengers and luggage were not all that could be desired. We had to bustle about in the dark; get porters as best we could and finally seize some of our luggage ourselves and hurry to the platform for Cawnpur.

We reached Cawnpur at about 10 o'clock in the morning, and after breakfast started off on our usual round of sightseeing. We first visited the site of General Wheeler's fatal encampment, the boundaries of which are marked by low white masonry pillars. Our guide was an old soldier, who had been through the Mutiny and waxed eloquent at the various monuments of that unhappy time. It needed no eloquence to conjure up the scenes of 1857. Pride at the heroism and even at this distant time horror and a stronger feeling too perhaps, at the sufferings of his fellow countrymen and women are predominant in the British mind. The story of General Wheeler's entrenchment at Cawnpur and its fate at the "Massacre Ghat" and "Memorial Well" are too well known to need repetition here. Nor is it our intention to re-awaken recollections of

the harrowing scenes of 1857. The passage from monument to monument calls up memories and feelings too sad and too bitter for words, and I was glad to pass on quickly from one to another of what are now "show places."

St. John's Memorial Church stands on the site of the old depôt barracks occupied by General Wheeler and all the Christian men and women of Cawnpur at the outbreak of the Mutiny. It is a handsome building and contains many beautiful marble tablets to the memory of those who died during and subsequent to the siege. At the "Massacre Ghat" we were told that the side of the steps, where the unarmed men and the helpless women and children were ruthlessly mowed down by the rebels, the natives consider accursed, and will not now draw water there nor approach the ghat at all after dark. The memorial gardens and well are beautifully kept, and when we visited the well, a young English gunner was on sentry at the wicket-gate and I alone was allowed to enter the sacred enclosure. Our photograph gives a good idea of the monument over the well. We visited every spot in Cawnpur to which the events of 1857 lend interest, but detailed descriptions would only be recapitulating what has been written of in various forms since the events took place.

Before leaving we spent two or three hours in the Elgin Mills, and were greatly interested in watching the complex machinery and the dexterity of the hundreds of operatives, to which these great mills give employment.

Lucknow is only a few hours' journey by rail from Cawnpur and reaching the former place at 2 P.M., we drove to the Kaisar Bagh, built in the reign of the late *ex* King of Oudh, who died in Calcutta in 1888, having been a pensioner of the British Government since the annexation of Oudh in 1856. This magnificent place cost Rs. 80,000,000 and occupied over two years in building.

position on the grand iron bridge that crosses the river obtained a fine view of the city and cantonment. Lucknow from this distance seemed to be well wooded and runs for miles along the river banks. From our position on the bridge, Lucknow, with its white flat-roofed houses, lofty domes and minarets, and the setting sun, bringing out the strong contrast of light and shade, has that peculiarly oriental aspect so much admired by European travellers. The suburbs since the British occupation have been laid out in roads shaded by beautiful avenues of trees and the Wingfield Park, through which we drove, is a beautiful specimen of landscape gardening. Lawns green as emeralds, marble statues gleaming snowy white against a background of cool green foliage, pretty vistas and a soft twilight sky make up a very refreshing picture. We had no time to see the town, and, perhaps, it is as well, as our Lucknow of memory will be free from the inevitable crooked streets and unsavoury concomitants of most Eastern towns.

XXVI.

OUR next destination was Faizabad, a military cantonment, about ninety miles from Lucknow. It is built on the site of the ancient city of Ajodhya, which is said to have originally covered 96 square miles, but this statement must be taken with the usual *grano salis*. Our only object in visiting Faizabad was to see the present town of Ajodhya, which contains fully one hundred Hindu temples besides Moslem places of worship. Ajodhya is said to be the birth-place of Ram, son of King Dasratha and hero of the great epic poem "The Rámáyana," and is resorted to by Hindu pilgrims in thousands every year. A fair called the *Ramnawmi* is held annually and attracts Hindus from all parts of India.

From Faizabad we had to drive out a distance of seven or eight miles to the remains of ancient Ajodhya, and there visited a few of the principal temples. On the sacred spot, where Ram is supposed to have been born, now stands a small Moslem mosque said to have been built by the Emperor Aurungzebe to the honour and glory of the true God and the Prophet, and for the confusion of his infidel subjects. Ajodhya is interesting from its old world traditions and fables, but in the present remnant of the great city there is little to detain the eager traveller, and after spending a few hours among

In the centre of the grounds is a spacious hall used as a Darbar room. It is of stucco, and at the time of our visit had just been done up and looked very fresh and handsome. At one end of the room is a large oil-painting of the Prince of Wales presented to the Talukdars of Oudh on the occasion of the visit of his Royal Highness to Lucknow in 1875. The Kaisar Bagh is a large quadrangle, the four sides of which are formed of long rows of buildings, formerly occupied by the King's harem, and afforded accommodation to one hundred and fifty wives of sorts with their numerous female attendants.

From the Kaisar Bagh we drove to the Husseinabad Imambara, the tomb of Mahomed Ali Shah, 3rd King of Oudh. This is a beautiful building, containing a silver throne or pulpit ascended by about twenty silver steps. The building stands at the end of a square, which is laid out in trim lawns and well-kept flower beds. The general effect is greatly marred by several minor buildings within the square, one of which, a feeble imitation of the Taj, contains oil paintings of the Nawabs of Oudh, beginning with the founder of the line, the Persian soldier of fortune, Saadat Khan (1732 A.D.). Saadat Khan was originally a Persian merchant and rose to be Subhadar of Oudh. He succeeded in establishing his independence of Delhi about the same time that the Nizam-ul-Mulk, ancestor of the present Nizam of Haidrabad, then Subadar of the Deccan, established his independence. His descendants ruled in Oudh till the annexation of the province by the British in 1856, owing to the gross misrule of the Nawabs. Saadat Khan's is a strong face full of power, but those of his descendants are not pleasant to look upon. They vary only in degrees of sensuality, ending in that of the last king—fat, smooth, complacent, weak and sensual. The great Imambara built by Nawab Asaf-ud-Dowla is

not more than two or three hundred yards from the Husseinabad Imambara, and contains the tomb of the builder. It is the great sight of Lucknow, and is said to have cost a fabulous sum. It also stands at the end of a quadrangle and is approached by gravel walks through flower beds and lawns. The sarcophagus is in the centre of a vast hall positively awe-inspiring in its stupendous proportions.

We had arranged to leave Lucknow by the night train and had not time to visit other and equally interesting relics of the time of the Nawabs. From the Imambara we went to the Residency, a three-storeyed house—the famous "Residency of Lucknow" held during the mutiny by a small band of Englishmen, hampered by women and children, against thousands of the well armed and well equipped rebel sepoys. Our photograph gives some idea of what this means. The building is simply riddled with shot and shell. We saw the underground rooms in which the women and children were huddled away and the air vents above, through which cannon balls occasionally came crashing. The Residency and to some extent the grounds have been left in the state they were in at the time of General Havelock's relief—testimony of an almost godlike courage and endurance, more eloquent far than sculptured monument.

We visited the museum and only regret our time was too short to admit of a proper inspection of its interesting collection. At the Secunderbagh, which we passed, a garden walled in on all sides, two thousand rebels were caught as in a trap and paid the penalty of their misdeeds. It was too late now for further sightseeing, and we contented ourselves by driving about the Cantonment, which is one of the prettiest we have yet seen. We drove along by the river, the Gumti, on which Lucknow is built, past the Club, quite a handsome building, and taking up a

the labyrinth of temples and shrines, we returned to Faizabad *en route* for Benares of many odours, of little stone gods innumerable, of cows and Brahmins, of squalid narrow, crooked streets and of sanctity immeasurable. We had looked forward to our visit to Benares, the holy city, as marking a period in our travels and had shortened our stay at Cawnpur, Lucknow and other places in our eagerness to reach this goal. We arrived in the night, at about 8 o'clock, and as it was incumbent on my companion, as a Hindu, to devote the first hours of the morning after arrival to religious exercises, it was agreed that he should spend the morning in company with a Brahmin priest in charge of the Porbandar temples at Benares, and by whom he was met and carried off at the Railway Station. I found most comfortable accommodation at Clark's Hotel, and my companion at the Porbandar *Uttara*, a building with temples adjoining, belonging to the Porbandar State.

The next morning, accompanied by a guide, I chartered a large boat with stern cabin, on the roof of which I put up the camera. It was a dazzlingly bright morning and I determined to use Ilford rapid plates and the drop shutter. The two photographs of the pilgrim ghats were taken as the boat glided quietly by. The bathers and worshippers could not have been aware that they were being handed down to posterity as I had not the assurance to have the boat stopped while adjusting the camera. I focused as we passed a deserted spot at what I considered to be the correct distance, and dropped the shutter opposite the ghats. The view along the river deserves all the encomiums drawn from enthusiastic travellers from time to time. Benares is washed by the sacred waters of the Ganges and pilgrim bathing ghats, pagodas, temples and shrines line the river's edge for over two miles.

The view is beautiful in its wonderful variety, and as the boat glides by, one seems to look on an unending succession

of dissolving views. The photographs in their rigid simplicity of light and shade convey no idea of the reality. The bathing steps or ghats and little wooden platforms built on poles above the water were thronged with devotees of both sexes and all ages, all, with the exception of a few *gesains*, who had nothing on worth mentioning, were clad in garments of the brightest hues. Purple, red, yellow and dazzling white being only a few of the many bright colours. The long row of temples and ghats faces east, and the bright morning sun, shining full upon them, added brilliancy to the scene, lighting up the dingy but picturesque buildings and intensifying the gaily coloured costumes of the people. On the wooden platforms, which jut out over the water's edge, devout Hindus, their foreheads smeared with ashes, seated cross-legged in rapt devotion, were unmindful of passing boats and the busy scene around them. Others stood on the edge of the platforms, and taking up a brass *lota* full of the sacred water, poured a libation to the rising sun, bending in reverential attitude to the god of day. The whole scene was interesting beyond description, probably of its kind not to be surpassed. Some of the temples are very old, and many lean dangerously out of the perpendicular. This architectural eccentricity is not due to the builder's fancy, but to the foundations having been sapped by the action of the water. The long line of buildings and the fantastic scenes along the water's edge terminate in Aurangzebe's mosque, the steps of which run down to the river's edge. There was not a single person on the steps and a great silence seemed to brood over this deserted spot, more striking by contrast with the animated scene in the Hindu quarter.

The mosque is said to have been built out of material torn by the great iconoclast from Hindu temples and Hindu shrines, the greater the sanctity of the demolished

places of infidel worship the greater the glory to the Moslem hero.

From the riverside ascending a hundred steps, we reached the courtyard of the mosque and another forty-four steps took us out on to the roof. Ascending eighty-seven winding steps, we emerged on the top of the minaret, from which Aurangzebe in his arrogant pride decreed that the Moslem call to prayer, from the first watch of morning even unto the last watch of night, should float over the sacred city of Hindu piety and Hindu asceticism.

Two hundred and thirty-six steps exactly from the water's edge carried us to a height, from which a perfectly glorious bird's-eye view of the city and country round is obtained. We seem to see through a kaleidoscope the throng, dwarfed by distance, of busy little people flitting about the water's edge in their garments of many hues. Quite a peep into the fairy-land of childhood. The big city at our feet was shorn of much of its characteristic grandeur by Mussalman conquerors at different times, and little of architectural beauty remains. It was late when I got to the hotel, and after a hasty breakfast joined my charge in a ramble through the city, visiting some of the principal temples which are reached through dirty, squalid alley ways, amid crowds of beggars, Brahamani bulls and fat and lean cows. We were greatly disappointed with the city. It is almost pathetic that so fair an exterior should enclose so much that is unsavoury. In "sacred" cities like Benares, where all must be kept "pure" amid the encroachments of Western ideas, active members of municipalities have up-hill work and meet with the greatest opposition from the orthodox, even from the so-called enlightened members of Hindu society. The prominent leaders would seem to be too busy clamouring for "place" and representative government to devote much time, even if

they were so inclined, to the depraved condition of so many of their countrymen, and to such frivolous considerations as sanitation. I give the following, in his own quaint style, from the pen of a native traveller, contributed to a small up-country Native paper : " It matters not to the people " there whether the pilgrim can have the '*darshan*' or " not, 'picc, pies, *bhang*, *ladoo*,' are the cries of the begging " Brahmins, young and old, and *chobar*; 'come, come, see this " 'or that, put your *daxnat*,' are the words always dinning " in the ears of the pilgrim. He is not allowed to have a " quiet minute for the purpose for which he has travelled " hundred and hundreds of miles * * * * * What are " the leaders of society doing to mitigate this state of evil? " Our congressionists aspire to legislative heights. Have " any attempts been made by them to begin at the beginning? " * * * * * It should not be forgotten that we must " deserve before we desire." Throughout a series of articles by this gentleman on his travels, there is abundance of sound common sense; but I am digressing. We visited the temple of Hunumon—the monkey god—the tutelary divinity of the Princes of the Jetwa family, to which my charge belongs. It was not a very imposing building, nor were the swarms of monkeys particularly edifying. My companion having performed all the religious duties of a good Hindu, we were glad to leave for Calcutta *en route* to Assam and the Himalayas.

At Calcutta our stay was short. We first paid our respects to H. E. Lord Lansdowne, and then went about a good deal and saw something of the city and suburbs. The business places in the city and the residences of the Europeans about Chowringhee struck us as being more European in appearance than Bombay. The Strand

* Sight of the god.

† Offerings to Brahmins.

Road, too, along the Hoogly, with its rows of steamers and sailing vessels, moored side by side along the bank, and the scene of an evening on this road with the well equipped carriages of the "great" is more European than anything one sees in Bombay. At the beautiful Eden Gardens of an evening, when the band plays, the well-kept lawn is covered with children, principally European, civilians and soldiers of the garrison in uniform, with a sprinkling of Baboos in flowing garments and bare heads who strut majestically up and down in front of the Band Stand.

We visited, among other places, the splendid docks at Kidderpur, the Zoological Gardens, Fort William and the site of the "Black-hole of Calcutta," and drove through the Native town, which cannot compare, at least in our loyal estimation, with our own *Urbs prima*. There were many attractions in Calcutta, but in imagination the mighty Brahmaputra stretched away before us through great forests, the home of the tiger and the elephant, and we were anxious to be once more on the march.

XXVII.

LEAVING Calcutta on the 21st February by an evening train from the Sealdah Railway Station, we reached Damookdea, on the right bank of the Ganges, which is known at this part as the Pudda, at about 8 o'clock. There is no regular railway station at this place, as the eccentric deviations of the river-bed will not allow of any permanent buildings, and only such temporary sheds as are indispensable are put up by the railway authorities.

Here we changed from the train to a steam ferry, a splendid large flat, on which dinner is provided, and just sufficient time allowed to eat it in peace. This interruption in the long railway journey is rather a pleasant break. The scene on the river-bank was most lively, and we had ample time to look round, as there was no trouble about luggage, which is transhipped under the guard's care. An electric light at the mast-head of the ferry lit up the ghat for about a hundred yards round. There were crowds of Native passengers, many of them the nearly nude semi-savages from the jungles of Chutia Nagpur, black as negroes, now on their way for employment on the tea-gardens of Assam. They poured down the river bank, swarming across the gangway, placed between the shore and the

steamer. Borrowing a fictitious unreality from the electric light, the whole looked like a scene from some gigantic play. Fortunately for the ordinary travellers, these crowds are stowed away on the lower deck, the spacious upper deck being reserved for first class passengers.

By the time dinner was over, we had reached the opposite bank, and were just in time to see the large ferry steamer warped alongside of the pier. From Sealdah we had journeyed in one of the spacious saloon carriages of the broad-gauge railway, but on the other side of the river at Sara, we found the diminutive carriages of the narrow-gauge. Here the traveller bound for Assam must be careful not to get into a wrong carriage, or another and most unpleasant change is necessitated about midnight at the Parbuttipur Junction. At Parbuttipur the line bifurcates into the branch lines for Darjeeling and the Brahmaputra, respectively.

During the night we had an accident, owing to the parting of one of the carriage couplings about the middle of the train. One or two carriages were partly driven into one another, and the occupants greatly alarmed. The only result, however, was a delay of a couple of hours, which made us late in reaching the ferry on the Teesta, where we were due at 7 o'clock in the morning, but did not arrive till after 9 o'clock. Arrived at the Teesta, we hurried along a strip of sandy beach and down a steep bank, with not a single habitation in sight, and entered a picturesque gondola-like boat. There, in a neat little cabin made of split bamboo interlaced, on a neat little table covered with a snowy white cloth, was a *déjeuner* of coffee, toast and eggs, all ready as if prepared for us in this wilderness by our fairy god-mother, and there, at the end of the cabin, stood the presiding genius, a Calcutta Khansamah in spotless raiment. After our

wearisome night in the train, we were deeply grateful to our fairy god-mother for this most welcome repast.

From the opposite bank of the river a two-foot gauge railway carried us to the banks of the Durlah. The first few miles of the line passes over stretches of sand and by sand-hills, but further on, the country grew green and fertile, and we passed several picturesque villages almost buried in clumps of bamboo. The houses, or rather huts, are of a kind we had not seen before. Neat walls of split bamboo support a semi-circular thatched roof, and a neat bamboo fence runs round a small garden in front, the whole forming quite a pretty little primitive cottage. It was 12 o'clock before we reached the Durlah, and crossing in boats, a further journey of five miles in a 2½-foot gauge tramway, with open carriages, brought us to Jatrapur, on the right bank of the great Brahmaputra. Writing of the Brahmaputra in 1857, in her interesting little volume, "British Rule in India," Miss Martineau says: "As a river, it is good for neither one thing nor the other. It is equally impracticable where it is one mile wide as where it is six, when it is lowest, when it is fullest, and at all, intervening times.

" * * * * * Day by day it makes and destroys banks and sandy shoals, so that any navigable use of it would be impossible if vessels could encounter the snags, sawyers and floating forest trees with which those of the Mississippi are not comparable." In a measure this description is correct, but sufficient allowance was not made for the enterprise of her country-men or the rapid improvements in machinery in this wonderful nineteenth century. The river is now navigable from its mouth to Debrogarh, a distance of 661 miles, and regular steamers perform the journey direct from Calcutta by the Sunderbunds, besides the mail steamers that run daily on the river itself above Jatrapur.

Reaching the Brahmaputra, we embarked at once on board the steamer "Dolphin," and after a substantial breakfast, of which the *chota hazree* on the Teesta was only a forerunner, we were in a mood to admire the scenery. In the "Dolphin" we made our first acquaintance with the regular stern paddle-wheel river steamer, though the writer had some years previously travelled five hundred miles on the Tigris in the side-paddle steamers of the Tigris and Euphrates Steam Navigation Company. The "Dolphin" is one of the earlier vessels built specially for service on the Brahmaputra, with 1-16 inch steel plates, very light draught, powerful engines and very fair accommodation. Later on we travelled on the "Indra," a magnificent vessel, having side-paddles with independent engines.

Long before we had finished breakfast, the steamer had cast adrift from the bank, and when we came on deck, was cutting through the water against a strong current, at the rate of ten knots an hour. A cold wind, delicious after the heat of Calcutta and our long journey of many changes, swept the vessel from stem to stern. The upper deck we shared with only two other passengers; but the lower deck was crowded with coolies—men, women, children and babies—bound for the tea estates of Assam. Whole families emigrate in this manner, under agreement for three or five years on good wages, and the thrifty ones often make a considerable sum and settle in Assam in preference to returning to their homes in Bengal, where the struggle for life is greater than among the lazy Assamese. The Assamese are constitutionally lazy, as the natural resources of the country are so great that a minimum of labour produces abundance.

The Brahmaputra, daughter of Brahma, is one of the largest rivers in the world. Between Jatrapur and Dubri,

where we changed into another steamer, a distance of fifty miles, the river is deep and rapid, but easy of navigation. Beyond Dubri the trouble begins. At the part we were passing through, the banks were steep and high and the country flat and uninteresting as far as the eye could reach. There was no sign of habitations of any kind along the bank, and we learnt that villages are all situated well inland, owing to the eccentric changes to which the course of the river is subject. In parts the alluvium of the river had been completely washed away, laying bare sloping banks of glistening white sand, but occasionally a stretch of beautifully green sward covered with browsing cattle, attended by a solitary herdsman, sloped down to the water's edge, proclaiming the proximity of a village.

Enormous alligators, in groups of four or five, stretch their unwieldy length along a strip of white sand, basking in the warm sunshine, and, as the steamer goes panting by, slip noiselessly into the water, causing scarcely a ripple on its placid surface.

When within a few miles of Dubri, we passed the magnificent steamer "Indra" with her four funnels. She swept past, like a floating mansion, down-stream at the rate of about sixteen knots an hour. Reaching Dubri at 6 o'clock in the evening, we had a few minutes' run on shore before leaving for Gauhatti in a steamer much smaller than the "Dolphin."

We had had little rest since leaving Calcutta. The long night-journey by rail, interrupted by the accident at midnight, the frequent changes the next day, and the excitement of the journey up the river, all combined to make us very weary and we slept peacefully through the night, although during the greater part there had been considerable noise and commotion on board. Waking at daylight, we

missed the familiar throb of the engines, and going on deck, found that the steamer had been fast on a sand-bank since 2 A. M. and that the crew were busy trying to warp her off by means of kedges. The vessel was under the command of a *sarang*, who seemed unable to decide what to do. He tried every device which, no doubt, long experience on the river suggested, but none of them, it appeared to us, persistently enough to produce any effect on the steamer. At 10 o'clock a steamer, on her downward course, hove in sight and, at a signal from the *sarang*, stopped, and the European Superintendent of the Company, fortunately happening to be on board, came to our rescue, and after a couple of hours' persistent effort, we were once more on our way up the river.

The country continued for some miles flat and uninteresting, but after another hour's steady steaming, a change began to creep over the face of the land. Reach succeeded reach in quick succession, and the scenery changed with the rapidity of dissolving views. At one time we ran into what seemed to be a wide lake, from which, to the unpractised eye, there was no possible outlet beyond. At the far end a high thickly-wooded hill ran diagonally across the stream, the north bank rose almost perpendicularly, and on the south a white shingly beach sloped gently down to the water, which broke on the sand with regular beat like the tiny wavelets of a miniature sea. The lake delusion was complete. The steamer's course was shaped as if it were intended to run through a hill, and not, till we were within a few yards of its steep sides, did an opening disclose itself, and, sweeping round high projecting rocks, we entered through a comparatively narrow channel, the valley proper of the Brahmaputra. We had passed from one world to another—the long interminable stretches of perfectly level country gave place to wild mountain scenery. Hills,

thickly wooded, ran down to the very water's edge, and in the far distance appeared great mountains enveloped in a thin transparent blue mist. The deep water was green as an emerald sea, and the complete change of scenery and rapid motion of the steamer through the keen air, after our wait on the sand-bank, was delightfully exhilarating. We passed rafts, laden with mountains of hay, floating down-stream and merely guided by long sweeps fastened to the stern. Occasionally appeared a grassy glade between the hills dotted with huts, evidently a fishing village, to judge from the nets hanging up to dry and the canoes moored to the bank.

Approaching the station of Goalpara, signs of life and industry, absent in the lower reaches of the river, were abundant. Patches of forest-clearing were covered with cultivation, numerous boats were being tracked up-stream by men on the bank with tow ropes, while other boats, with sails set, glided down in mid-channel. Pretty villages on the north bank were almost buried among areca palms, plantains and feathery bamboos, relieved by the white and mauve flowers of the Bohenia. Wrapped in their red blankets, the day being cold, numbers of villagers came to gaze as we steamed by, adding much to the pictur-esquefulness of the scene. Away in the far distance, their summits lost in azure sky, rose the mighty Himalayas. Truly, the scene was fair to look upon.

We ran on for about a mile and a half, past Goalpara, which looks as if situated far inland, and rounding a narrow tongue of sandy beach bore down on the village standing on the slope of a hill at one end of a small bay. The thatched cottages, of which the village is principally composed, are surrounded by a low trellis-work fencing and the general appearance was both singular and pleasing. Before rounding the point which brought us into the bay

we passed the "Gates of Assam," a narrow passage between two low hills, now perfectly dry, but which thirty years ago was a deep channel and the route by which vessels entered the reach beyond. We now steamed through a wide shallow sheet of water leaving the "gates" on our left. During thirty years the bed of the river has so changed its course that far in the interior may now be seen moats and wells which at that time ran along the river-bank and drew their water-supply from the river, and villages, which in former times skirted the river-bank, are now miles inland. As we steamed along, the unstable nature of the banks was apparent. Even the wash from the steamer when close under the bank brought down masses of earth, and thirty years hence the course of the river will probably have gone elsewhere or have returned to its old bed, burying in its course the villages that now stand along its banks.

We ran on after leaving Goalpara till 8 o'clock, when the black opaqueness of the night necessitated the anchor being dropped, and there we lay till the moon rose after midnight and the onward journey was resumed. Daylight, however, was succeeded by a fog, so dense that once more the anchor was dropped and the steamer remained stationary till nearly 9 o'clock, when the fog lifted and we once more pressed on. The air was so keen and invigorating that to keep ourselves warm and work off superfluous energy we spent the time on deck before breakfast with the other two passengers in athletics of sorts. There was nothing outside the steamer to attract attention as we were once more passing between high banks and very uninteresting country. Navigation seemed extremely difficult owing to the numerous islands and shoals which divide the river into many channels, most of which are not navigable and the steamer was continually zigzagging

from bank to bank, at one time well under one bank, at another in mid-channel, and again hugging the opposite shore.

At the station of Polashbarry, the stem of the steamer was rammed into the mud-bank of the river and the steamer remained motionless for a few minutes, while mails were being exchanged. The engines were then reversed and gliding away from the bank, the steamer was once more on her upward voyage. After leaving Polashbarry we passed a rocky promontory jutting far into the stream, where the passage is narrow and the current rapid and dangerous. At night a red beacon light marks the course; but it is only in cases of emergency that the commanders care to risk the passage after dark. Rounding this point almost within touch of the rocks, the steamer entered a wide sheet of water almost like an inland sea and for some minutes ran in the direction of what appeared to us to be a long low-lying reef of black rocks. The reef on nearer approach proved to be flocks of wild duck, probably four or five thousand birds. The steamer was almost in the midst of them before they rose in one great cloud and settled again not a quarter of a mile away. We passed thousands of geese and pelicans. On one long narrow strip of sand, pelicans in thousands covered every inch of ground, while others kept hovering over and dropped on to any vacated spot.

At midday we reached our destination, Gauhatti, a *picturesque* spot, with a church and small English community.

XXVIII.

GAUHATTI was the seat of the Kamrup dynasty of Assam and the ancient religious capital of the province. It is situated near the junction of the Kullung and Brahmaputra and receives most of the trade of Lower Assam. The principal local exports are lac and mustard-seed. During our short stay we visited a mustard-oil mill worked by steam, but did not stay long, as the effect of the pungent fumes on the eyes and olfactory nerves of the unaccustomed is decidedly embarrassing.

Alongside of what may be called the jetty for want of a better name, but which is merely a large floating wooden platform, several river steamers and lighters were moored, and the place had quite a busy look. The river steamers are a great institution in Assam. Tea-planters and Government officials from the interior often take a voyage up or down the river as a relaxation from business and often for health sake, as the change has been found to be beneficial.

The captains of the steamers plying to Calcutta generally return from the capital full of news and often full of little things to sell. In the old days, a popular character on the river and one of the pioneers of the river service was a Captain Elder. He could never do enough to make his passengers comfortable and was a great favourite, but his one weakness was to drive a good bargain with the unsuspecting traveller if he could. Many and varied

were the attempts made to "sell" him in retaliation, but all in vain, till one day the Commissioner for the Garu Hills, whose "smile was childlike and bland," was travelling on Captain Elder's steamer and had made up his mind to retaliate if any attempt were made on his credulity. Before reaching Gauhatti the captain began to expatiate on the merits of a dog-cart he had picked up in Calcutta, which was then on board and just the thing for the Commissioner. The latter protested he did not want a dog-cart, but the captain was on his hobby and insisted on an inspection at least, and bore off his victim in triumph to see the cart, which was in the midst of bales of goods and difficult to get at. The Commissioner at last pretending to yield stipulated that he would buy the cart if he were allowed to try his horse in it at Gauhatti and if the trial were successful. The captain was jubilant : "The "dog-cart was as light as a baby's perambulator, &c., &c." At Gauhatti it was taken from the midst of the other cargo at immense trouble and landed. The Commissioner produced his clothes horse. Tableau !!

At Gauhatti we stayed for one day in the Traveller's Bungalow and having arranged for dàk to Shillong, a distance of 70 miles, started the next morning at about 7 o'clock. The conveyance was a small tonga with seats in front for the driver and one other and behind seats for two. The latter we occupied and the one servant, who accompanied us, took the seat beside the driver. The ponies were two smart little Manipur ponies, about twelve hands high, one harnessed in the shafts and the other to a splinter bar. The pace was good, sometimes a gallop and the road was fairly good, too, but the springs of the cart, alas, were none too springy. Every little inequality in the road sent us into each other's laps and jolted our heads against the hood or sides of the cart.

Shillong is over 5,000 feet above sea-level, but for the first few miles the road runs over perfectly level country with rice-fields and swamps on either side. The first stage at which a change of ponies is made is some height above Gauhatti, but from this point the real ascent begins. As we rose higher the air grew keener and the character of the vegetation changed. For the most part the road runs through dense jungle of great forest trees, but occasionally we catch glimpses of the most beautiful scenery. Only glimpses, alas, for the jolting of the tonga going at full gallop nearly the whole time compelled us to cling on to the sides to prevent our being maimed or pitched out. This, I need hardly remark, though not merely a "traveller's tale" is slightly exaggerated, and let it be remembered that our "notes" were written after the journey when we felt like the battered figure-head of an old man-of-war.

It was 5 o'clock when we reached Shillong, but, tired and weary as we were, we could not but admire this charming little hill station. We saw hill-slopes covered with pine-trees, pretty English cottages in the midst of gardens full of English flowering shrubs, rosy English children wrapped in real winter clothing as in the far off English home, real chimneys with real coal smoke issuing such as we never see in our Southern Indian homes. We had been sated with wild forest scenery and Shillong came upon us like an oasis in a great desert. We stayed there four pleasant days. It is the head-quarters of the Chief Commissioner of Assam, and, besides a civilian community, a regiment of Goorkha sepoys is quartered at Shillong. There are some pretty walks and the climate is all that could be desired, but a holy calm rests on Shillong, the most sanguine could not call it lively. The Khassias, who come into the station with market produce and other

articles for sale, are a sturdy race of mountaineers distinguished from the Assamese by their decided Mongolian type of face and ruddy fair complexion. They are a curious race with some very curious customs. After marriage the husband assumes the wife's name and the wife is virtually head of the family.

At every place we have visited it has been a pleasant duty to learn something of its history. The following slight sketch of Assam was gleaned principally from the official *Gazetteer*. When the Province was taken over by the British Government in 1824, the country was in a deplorable state, owing to internecine feuds and constant warfare with hardy border tribes, of whom we saw some splendid specimens in the Khassias about Shillong—people with whom the effete Assamese could have but a poor chance. To Hindus, Assam is classic soil, having been the scene of some of Shiva's exploits after his marriage with Parvati, daughter of the Hymalayas, which took place in the once famous district of Kamrup, of the ancient kingdom of the same name. There are several important places of Hindu pilgrimage, some of which are still held in high veneration; but, though they are visited by pilgrims from all parts of India, the number has of late years greatly diminished notwithstanding the facilities offered by the improved means of communication between India and Assam, and many of the temples have fallen into disrepair. On the summit of a hill called Kamyakya, the hill of the thousand virgins, about two miles from Gauhatti, is the shrine of the goddess of love, where in former times human sacrifices are said to have been offered. At one time as many as one thousand virgins are said to have been devoted to the service of the goddess and resided in a village near the temple premises. Two annual gatherings are still held and are attended by a

goodly number of pilgrims, but the "Vestal Virgins" are a thing of the dim past and the gathering grows less every year. We were anxious to visit this place, but it was impossible to spare the time, and we had to give up the idea of a photograph, which we had been most anxious to get. Gauhatti is said to have been a large city during the period of the Assam dynasty and was the capital of the viceroys or Bar Phukan of Lower Assam. The past history of the country, which included portion of the valley of Assam Proper, besides districts in Bengal and Sylhet, is legendary and is derived entirely from the two great Sanskrit Epics. To come, however, to more reliable history. In the early part of the thirteenth century the Ahans, a Shan tribe, conquered the upper portion of the Assam Valley and gradually extended their conquests down the valley of the Brahmaputra. "They intermarried "with the people, some of their kings were converted to "Hinduism, and the country was well ruled." Our first serious connection with the country dates from 1780, when a formidable rising of the Moamaries, a powerful religious sect, took place, the Raja Gaurinath was defeated, and fled to Gauhatti, whence he appealed for British aid. A force of 700 armed Native guards was despatched to the Raja's help, but was utterly destroyed, while an armed force sent by the Raja of Manipur was defeated; at the same time the Raja of Darrang, taking advantage of Gaurinath's distress, made a descent on Gauhatti. The Raja Gaurinath then sent a deputation to Calcutta with the result that in 1792 the British Government despatched a detachment of troops under the command of Captain Welsh, who defeated the Raja of Darrang, quelled the Moamari insurrection, re-instated Gaurinath and reduced the whole valley to obedience. In 1794, Captain Welsh was recalled, a few months later Gaurinath died, and in the succeeding reign,

which lasted till 1809, there was comparative peace. In the following reign the Raja invited the Burmese to help him in a quarrel with his Prime Minister. An overwhelming force was sent and from this time Burmese influence in Assam became paramount and a few years later ended in the deposition of the reigning Raja and the installation of a reputed son of the Burmese king—a mere puppet—the real power being in the hands of the Burmese General, who had been sent to uphold the Burmese nominee on his throne. This state of affairs continued till 1824, when the persistent insults of the Burmese and their encroachments on our frontier led to the first Burmese war. A British force advanced up the river with a gun-boat flotilla and during the cold season of that year conquered the whole valley. In the same year, by the treaty of Yendaboo, the King of Burmah ceded Assam to the E. I. Company. In 1832 a part of Upper Assam was constituted a separate principality and made over to Purandhar Singh, who was deposed in 1838 for misgovernment. Since then the entire province remained an integral part of the British dominions in India. By a proclamation issued in 1874, Assam, together with the Bengal Districts of Goalapra and Cachar, were constituted an independent administration under a Chief Commissioner. The first officer appointed to this important post was Colonel Keatinge, V.C., C.S.I., who had previously held the appointment of Political Agent in our own province of Kathiawar, and Kathiawar owes much of its present prosperity to the reforms initiated by Colonel Keatinge. In September of the same year, the district of Syhlet was added.

¹ The Chief Commissioner is assisted by a Secretary, two Judges, Deputy Commissioners, Medical officers, Inspector-General of Police, in short, the staff of a Lieutenant-Governor. The hill tribes about have kept the Government

pretty busy at different times with their aggressions and encroachments necessitating several military punitive expeditions, the last of which took place in the Naga hills owing to two British officers having been treacherously murdered. The only hill people we saw about Shillong were Khassias, short in stature, but of grand physique. They have kindly, pleasant faces and bright red cheeks, but their mouths are always filled with a decoction of pan and betel-nut and the lips are discoloured and the mouth is misshapen by the constant use of this compound. The Khassia women we saw carrying loads were broad-shouldered and powerfully built. There is an old tradition in Shillong, which we give for what it is worth, that a Khassia woman once carried on her back by stages, from Gouhatti to Shillong, a distance of 70 miles, a grand square piano? We were within thirty miles of Cherapoonjee, which has the largest rainfall in the world (805 inches in 1861), and had an idea of returning to Calcutta by Chera-
poonjee and Goallundo; a route which passes through grand scenery, but the journey would have occupied more time than we could spare, and after our short stay in Shillong we returned the route we had gone to the Parbattipur Junction, where we took train for Darjeeling, the well-known Himalayan hill resort, 7,000 feet above sea-level. We did the journey down the river in the splendid steamer "Indra;" and had a most enjoyable passage. An agreeable kindly commander, a roomy, comfortable steamer and a well kept table are not to be despised even amid beautiful scenery.

XXIX.

WE cannot bid adieu to Assam without some notice of the TEA that has become so great an industry in the province. As far back as 1822, it was found that the tea-plant grew wild in the northern part of Assam, and an attempt was made to introduce its cultivation. For want of Government support nothing was done till thirteen or fourteen years later, when the subject was seriously taken up by Lord William Bentinck's Government. Scientific opinion was in favour of an experiment. A Tea Committee was appointed in Calcutta and nurseries established in Assam under a Government Superintendent. The Government tea-gardens having, in a few years, proved a success, private enterprise stepped in and the "Assam Tea Company" was formed. River steamers subsequently carried away to good markets the produce of the gardens and opened up the fertile valley of the Brahmaputra to an era of prosperity, to which it had long been a stranger. From a few hundred acres under tea-cultivation, the industry has spread over an area comprising several hundred thousand acres, producing many million pounds of tea annually. The Government tea-gardens were for some years maintained side by side with those of private companies and individuals, but

application for land from European merchants in India and England were so numerous that in 1849 Government finally resigned the tea industries, which from that year have been wholly in the hands of companies and single planter owners.

The people of Assam cannot be bound down to regular hard work, and the importation of coolie labour from Bengal has become a necessity. Recruiting is carried on in two ways, either through agents in Calcutta and the coolie districts of Bengal or through garden sirdars.

The agents send out coolie gatherers, and when a sufficient number has been got together, batches are despatched to the plantations at so much a head, delivered at such stations on the Brahmaputra as may be agreed upon. Coolies of both sexes are engaged generally for a period of five years, and at the expiration of their agreement, either settle in the country or re-engage for a further term. The sirdars are coolies, but of intelligence superior to their brethren and undertake to supply coolies direct to the planter without the intervention of an agent. Having worked in a garden for some time, these men go off to their homes and pick up the best men and women they can get, many of whom are their friends and relations. A sufficient number having been got together, they start off with them to the gardens in Assam.

Recruiting is carried on under the Cooly Emigration Act, under strict Government supervision through every stage. Before leaving home their names must be registered at the nearest magistrate's office and on arrival at the garden they are again registered and formal agreements entered into with the planter. Each garden, or group of gardens, is obliged to keep a resident medical officer, ranging in rank from the diplomaed European to the Native apothecary, according to the extent of the charge.

Returns have to be submitted periodically by the planters to the magistrate of the district in Assam, comprising information regarding births, deaths, transfers from one garden to another, desertions, re-engagements, &c., &c. The magistrate examines each garden periodically and can insist on any improvement, sanitary or otherwise, that he may consider necessary. His power is almost unlimited, even to closing a garden altogether. The planters sometimes complain of being harassed by the operation of the Act ; but, from what we could gather, much seems to depend on the character of the individual magistrate. If he be a man of tact, the rules are worked without the slightest friction; but undue interference may do considerable harm to planter and coolie alike.

Legislation was some years ago found to be necessary to prevent the emigration degenerating into a species of slave trade, and old planters acknowledge that Government control will always be an absolute necessity. The Act only applies to coolies engaged under its provisions, others joining gardens voluntarily do so on the planter's terms.

The best coolies are the half-savage inhabitants of the wilder parts of Bengal, and the worst, those supplied by contractors and picked up about the large towns, in the valley of the Ganges and in the North-Western Provinces. The coolie's life is by no means a hard one. They suffer at first from the change of climate, but soon become acclimatised and thrive. On well conducted gardens the planters for their own, if not for humanity sake, try to keep their coolies happy and contented. The coolies have comfortable quarters, and earn such good wages that they can live in a way they never dreamt of in their far-off homes. All work is carried on on the "task work" principle, and an industrious husband and wife can earn three days' wages each in one day, to say nothing of the

children's earnings at leaf-plucking. As an illustration of the improvidence of the Assamese, it may be mentioned that a population of three millions, whose only cultivation is rice under the most perfectly favourable conditions, cannot grow sufficient extra to meet the demand of about five hundred thousand coolies, and Government stipulations compel the planters therefore to import and supply rice to their people at certain fixed rates. As a consequence in the gardens of Upper Assam, where the indigenous population is scanty as well as lazy, the planters have to import rice by steamer in large quantities, and have frequently to sell at a price lower than they have paid.

Our information was obtained from a perfectly reliable source, and it was gratifying to learn the truth regarding a system, which so often comes in for hostile criticism and comment, apparently wholly unmerited.

XXX.

DARJEELING has been a summer resort for the European residents of the moist plains of Bengal for many years, but until recent years was so difficult of access that visitors were not numerous. The journey, a distance of over 300 miles, was performed partly by rail, partly by river-steamer on the Ganges, a journey of five or six hours, and partly by dāk-gharry, of which our journey from Gauhati to Shillong may be taken as a fair sample. Since the completion of the Northern Bengal and the Mountain Railways, the traveller from Calcutta performs the entire journey by rail, the only interruption, a pleasant one of less than an hour, occurring at Damookdea on the Ganges, where passengers are ferried across in a steam-ferry to the Sara Ghat Railway Station. At Parbattipur Junction we met the train from Calcutta and reached Silliguri, where the Mountain Railway begins, in time for breakfast. This railway, two-feet gauge, with its little open carriages and cushioned chairs in the first class, looks like a toy railway as we take our seats, but is a grand piece of engineering skill and was at the time it was built unique of its kind. The rails were first laid over the old cart road at the awful

gradient of one in twenty; but various improvements since executed have reduced the incline considerably. Improvements in the gradient are, I believe, made almost yearly, and at the time of our visit work was going on along the line with this object. For about nine miles after leaving Silliguri, the road passes through almost level country by tea-gardens and factories and through dense forest. From the first station at which we stopped, the serious business of scaling the 7,400 feet began. Up, up we continue to rise, now hanging over a deep ravine, now passing under a bridge and the next moment over it. Again we sweep round a loop and cutting a complete figure of 8, begin again to wind away up the mountain side. At times we run along the edge of a bare hill and look from a dizzy height of several thousand feet across miles of fields in the flat country below. Great forest-trees of the Terai look like tiny shrubs, and the inequalities of vast stretches of undulating tracts of country are smoothed into the even regularity of a closely shaven lawn. Occasionally we zigzag up a few hundred feet, shunting up steep little sidings and gliding on to a line, from which we look down on to the passage we had been labouring up only a few minutes before. Under a bridge and over it, round figure of 8 loops, by gloomy ravines, through forests, round bare hills; on, on we go till Kurseong is reached, 4,500 feet above sea-level. Here we make a halt for lunch, and the down-train being in at the same time there is quite a busy scene. Among the passengers round the luncheon-table, we recognise several unmistakable American tourists. We sat next an American lady and got into conversation. She remarked a gentleman at one end of the table and announced that she guessed he was American. This was evident to the most untravelled; but I asked innocently how she could tell, and whether she did not recognise in me a fellow-citizen. Sub-

jecting me to rather an embarrassing scrutiny she said: "you an American? You are a Britisher, I guess."

We had just time enough for lunch and were once more on our upward journey. Kurseong is about twenty miles from Darjeeling and the line keeps for the most part along the mountain-side, winding into hollows and round bluff spurs, and a very fine view is obtainable the greater part of the way. At Ghoom, 7,400 feet above sea-level, we pass through a cutting in the hills and descend about 400 feet to the railway station at Darjeeling. Here the crush of men and women coolies, principally Lepchas, clamouring for our luggage, was most annoying. The platform of the little station was a dense mass of these creatures closely wedged together. They struggled and fought and tore at our baggage, and, much as we strove to defend our property, we were almost in despair, when a respectable looking young Englishman, representing the "Drum Druid Hotel," pushed through the crowd with his card and we were only too happy to resign ourselves to his care. He soon selected a few of the belligerents, and after a pretty stiff climb we found ourselves in very comfortable quarters in a house, not at all like a hotel in appearance, perched on the edge of a hill overlooking the town and commanding a very fine view of the valley below. The tops of the distant mountains were lost in cloud-land, so that we had to contain our souls in patience and hope that the snowy-range would be visible some other day. We stayed at the "Drum Druid Hotel" during our visit to Darjeeling and had no cause to regret our hasty choice. Everything was satisfactory from first to last.

Darjeeling was first fixed upon as a splendid site for a sanitarium by Mr. Grant of the East India Coy.'s Civil Service and Captain Lloyd, in 1828, during the Government

of Lord William Bentinck. A survey of the Sikkim Hills was made and reports submitted to Government, but owing to the matter having to be referred to the Directors of the Company at home and various formalities gone through, it was not till nearly ten years later that a sanitarium for British troops at Darjeeling was decided upon, and the rental of Rs. 3,000 a year settled with the Rajah of Sikkim, in whose territory it was situated. The rent was subsequently withdrawn, owing to the Rajah having seized, contrary to treaty, and confined two peaceful English gentlemen, one of whom was Sir Joseph Hooker, who were botanising and hunting for geological specimens in his country.

The climate is perfect, as the healthful appearance of the hill-people, as well as European visitors and residents, especially women and children bear testimony to. The latter were almost too rosy, if one can call by that delicate tint the almost scarlet colour, which the pure, keen mountain air brings into the cheeks. Darjeeling is very pretty and the surrounding scenery, wild and grand beyond description. We did not get a glimpse of the snows from Darjeeling though we rode to Tiger Hill, some considerable height above the cantonment and which at most times of the year commands a grand view. We got into a Scotch mist and could only see ten yards in front of us. Before going to Darjeeling we had made up our minds for an expedition out to Sandakphoo, on the Nepal Frontier Road, from which we had learnt that a view of Kinchinjunga and Everest is assured at all times of the year. Our failure for several days in succession to get even a momentary glance from Darjeeling itself determined us to undertake the trip, and the proprietor of the hotel took all responsibility of providing for the journey himself, and his arrangements were perfect.

XXXI.

WE left Darjeeling a little after 9 o'clock on the morning of the 7th March and, mounted on powerful shaggy hill-ponies, rode through the village of Jalapahar to Ghoom, where we turned off on to the Nepal Frontier Road. After passing Ghoom the road, as far as Jorpokri where fresh ponies awaited us, skirted a deep valley under the ridge of a high mountain. We passed through primeval forests ; the trunks of giant trees were clad in soft velvety moss of a deep dark green and from the branches long strips of moss hung in graceful festoons. Through an occasional opening among the trees, we caught glimpses of sky above, which, meeting the clouds in the valley, seemed to form a vast ethereal space above and below. This part of the road leads to several large villages, and from points along it, paths to tea-gardens run down the slopes of the valley, and the number of people we met coming and going rather interfered with the grand feeling of solitude we had determined to indulge in on leaving Darjeeling. Arriving at the Jorpokri Travellers' Bungalow, 7,400 feet above sea-level, at noon, we made a hasty lunch and mounting fresh ponies started for Toungloo. For about a mile a rugged pathway ascended steadily, and then skirting a high peak descended abruptly into a valley on the other

side of the range we had so far followed. Down, down went the path, so steep that we found it much more comfortable to dismount and lead our ponies. The road still lay through magnificent forest, but in the warmer atmosphere and shelter of the valley the foliage of the forest trees was more luxuriant and the underwood thicker. The moss on the trunks of the big trees was softer and of a richer green, and on its spongy surface the white wax-like flowers of some beautiful orchid bloomed high up above reach. Ferns drooped in graceful fronds and tiny green creepers clung to the sides of the tree, the whole forming a combination with which no artistic fernery could compare. We had left behind us all signs of bustle and life, and the only sound that broke the silence of this Sylvan solitude was the twitter of a stray bird, for we saw very little bird life. Descending about 1,000 feet we reached the ridge of a "divide" between two valleys, and began the ascent of the Toungloo spur. A toilsome ascent of five miles brought us to an elevation of about 9,000 feet, and we found ourselves among beautiful magnolias and rhododendrons, some of which were in full flower, while banks of moss were covered with clusters of snow primroses. Nearing the top of Toungloo, all the hollows in the pathway and all sheltered spots on the hill-side were full of snow. My companion was quite excited and jumped off his horse to test the strange white substance he was looking at for the first time in his life. As we mounted higher, the big forest-trees gave place to thick bamboo reed-like grass, growing to a height of 40 feet, and as we continued to ascend, the patches of snow grew more frequent and increased in extent and depth, till, arriving at the plateau, on which a small rest-house stands, a wide sheet of snow met our view. On the roof of the little bungalow snow was piled up a foot thick and on the four

sides, banks of snow rose to a height of six and eight feet. Beyond, the mountain side and the roadway leading to our next halting place and destination, Sandakphoo, was one great snow-drift—snow on all sides of us and away in the distance, gleaming in patches through the dark green of the jungle which covered the hill sides. Towards the great snowy range the prospect was enveloped in dense drifting clouds, but the valley behind presented a most lovely sight. The setting sun, breaking through banks of cloud, bathed the upper slopes of the hills in softest light, bringing out in strong contrasts the varied hues of the forest foliage, while below, the depths of the great valley were lost in impenetrable blackness. The air was keen and cold, and as there was still nearly an hour of daylight left, we started off for a brisk walk and obtained some magnificent views. My companion learnt for the first time what a snow-ball was, but we were glad to get back to the little house and sit round a great wood-fire that blazed and crackled cheerily in an open grate. Our servants and luggage had preceded us from Darjeeling and everything was in readiness at the bungalow.

Rising the next morning while it was yet dark, and, oh! so cold, I threw a few dry logs on the smouldering fire, which blazed up brightly after a little coaxing, and dressing by the fire-light roused my companion. Our great ambition was to see the sun-rise over the snowy range. Swallowing a cup of hot coffee, we rushed out into the faint dawn. There had been a hard frost during the night, and hurrying over the snow, scarcely an impression of our footsteps remained on its hard surface. The air was bracing, and in this beautiful dry atmosphere the cold, now that we were moving briskly along, was hardly perceptible. Not far from the house, a bare peak, about 200 feet high, rises above the plateau, clear of anything likely

to interrupt the view. Hurrying along with quickening pulses and digging our feet into the hard snow on the side of the hill, we stood on the top of the peak, bare of jungle, just in time to see the sunrise over the eternal snows. First one tiny streak of pink sunlight gleamed on the highest peak, then peak after peak, gorge after gorge, was illumined by the rosy light. The clouds dropped slowly like a mantle from the shoulders of the hoary giants and the sacred heights of great Everest and Kinchinjunga stood revealed in their august majesty. There, before us, rose the vast inaccessible heights of the eternal snows, which from year to year, generation to generation, age to age, have defied the burning rays of the eternal sun. Our hearts were too full for speech and we watched in awe-stricken silence the great panorama opening before us. With nothing to break the view, the great snowy range, seeming to stretch from earth to the heavens above, stood forth, soft sunlight lying on the white peaks, the dark lines and shadows revealing mighty chasms, where no living foot has trod. The scene was such as will dwell in our memories when all else has faded.

Down in the valley below, a thin purple mist filled all space. Away in the distance fleecy clouds, white as the snow at our feet, rolled along in vast ocean billows, and out of their depths, the black tops of the lower ranges of hills rose like tiny islets in some mysterious troubled sea. The sun had risen clear of the highest mountains and hung suspended in the blue sky a great angry ball of glowing fire. We seemed to stand in space two microscopic specks on the "roof of the World."

All the vast profundity around was now bathed in warmest sunlight; but, while we had been standing absorbed, our feet, buried in snow, had become numb, and almost perished, we hastened back to the bungalow to prepare for the onward march to Sandakphoo.

Breakfast over, we were once more on the move. We passed several hamlets, each homestead marked at the four corners by tall bamboo poles from which fluttered white strips of cotton cloth, bearing the pious Buddhist ejaculation "*Om Mani Padmi Om*" in innumerable repetitions. This is prayer made easy. The trusting Buddhist believes that the words are wafted by the four winds of heaven to the great invisible, saving him the trouble of practical devotion. It reminds one of the old sailor's answer to the parson, who asked him if he ever lifted his heart in prayer—"Yes, your reverence, over my bunk "I have nailed up the Lord's prayer. When I turns in at "night I points to it and says them's my sentiments ; "when I turns out in the morning I does the same."

The few people we saw about the little hamlets were Lepchas, fine sturdy hill-people of the Mongolian type, looking perfectly happy and contented in their strange out-of-the-world homes guarded by great shaggy dogs that barked furiously at us as we rode past.

Our way, at first, lay along the ridge of a great "divide" and then along a path cut into the mountain side. The snow was so thick on the ground that we soon gave up all thought of riding, though our sturdy ponies were very sure-footed. We floundered along up to our ankles in snow, occasionally sprawling into a soft shallow drift, only to rise with a laugh and resume our journey. There is something exhilarating in the keen rarefied atmosphere that induces a wonderful flow of spirits. Sheltered as we were for the most part behind a mountain that towered above the path-way, not a breath of wind was perceptible and the hard exercise in the still cold air was almost intoxicating in its effect. The path at one time ran up a steep incline and then abruptly down ; but we seemed to be steadily descending a valley

and after a time left the snow behind us. Here we were able to ride again; but it was only for a very short distance. The way again led up a very steep ascent, snow again filled the path-way and once more we dismounted and led our floundering ponies. By 1 o'clock we had only done about eight miles from Toungloo, reaching a great natural causeway across a gorge. Patches of melting snow lay all round, a Scotch mist drove over-head and a piercing wind compelled us to take refuge under the lee of a great rock, where we discussed, in the phraseology of Artemus Ward, "a cold collection." The luxury of the much abused cigarette after the inner man had been refreshed, was, under these circumstances, a luxury indeed. Refreshed considerably by our short halt, we resumed our journey through slippery, melting snow and in a circumambient atmosphere of raw mist. This lasted for about a couple of miles, when we got into hard snow again. The journey so far had been fairly easy though there were several very stiff bits of climbing. Reaching the foot of the spur, on which the Sandakphoo Rest House stands, the real labour of the day began—only two miles, but two awful miles of almost perpendicular snow ramparts.

We had been warned by the servant whom we had brought with us from Darjeeling that these last two miles were "** bahothe baary*" and he did not exaggerate; he might even have used a stronger term. The road, if such it can be called, was entirely obscured by snow, which lay in one uninterrupted drift from the slopes of the hill above to the depths of the valley below, and our only guide were the foot-prints of our servants and coolies, who had gone on some time before, apparently in single file. Riding was out of the question: we had to scramble along as best we could, dragging

* Very heavy.

the ponies after us. Oh! that interminable wall of provokingly beautiful monotonous snow. Up! up!! up!!! would it never end. At every footstep we sank up to our ankles and at every few paces into a hollow and up to our knees. It was very wearisome work but there was an element of danger that lent excitement to the climb. Sometimes on one side of us yawned an awful precipice, and the bank of snow on and high above the path seemed to rise almost perpendicularly. Occasionally we came to a small rustic bridge across a water-course—some of the planks broken by the weight of snow. At such places great caution was necessary, and it was wonderful to see how unconcernedly the ponies scrambled along stopping every now and then to grab a mouthful of snow. The two miles seemed to lengthen into a dozen; every turn in the zig-zag path looked as if it must be the last. But still a great wall of snow would rise above us. Sometimes it was hard and slippery as ice—the most trying of all, as there did not seem to be a foot of level ground the whole way up. A never ending climb, and frequent were the halts called to recover breath. At last the top was reached and all thoughts of fatigue vanished in the delight of being at the glorious altitude of 12,000 feet. On a small plateau, almost buried in snow the little Rest House nestled, looking very snug. The snow lay all round in great banks, and as far as the eye could reach all nature was enveloped in a white pall.

In the house, a perfect bon-fire blazed on the hearth. Our willing servants were all ready and a chair before the fire with a steaming cup of coffee and a cigarette, and we were quite prepared to wait an hour or two for dinner, which was being got ready. The next morning we were up at daylight and tramping through the snow to a low hill close to the bungalow,

planted the legs of the camera in the snow and took a photograph of the snowy range. The cold was intense and the photograph taken under the greatest difficulty. One of us had to hold on to the legs of the camera to prevent its being blown over by a violent piercing wind that our unsheltered position on the hill exposed us to. It was with difficulty we could keep the focusing cloth over the camera and the screw seemed to cut into one's fingers like a knife. But we were not to be beaten, and succeeded in obtaining a view which, on development, proved to be fairly good, as will be seen from the copy. The atmosphere was beautifully clear and the sun shone brightly. Mount Everest, 29,000 feet, looking barely an hour's journey away and quite easy of access. The view of the great snowy range is magnificent from Sandakphoo, but the scenery generally cannot compare in variety and grandeur to the view obtained from Toungloo. We seemed to be within the influence of the perpetual line of snow ourselves, for, as far as the eye could reach, there was nothing but snow, ending in the mighty ramparts of the eternal snow. Mount Everest, a solitary peak, in shape like a sugar-loaf, is not so imposing as Kinchinjunga, with its enormous magnitude, though the highest point of Kinchinjunga is about 2,000 feet lower than Everest.

Returning to the Rest House, I took a photograph of my charge and a few of our servants and coolies standing out in the snow, in front of the house, and we then started on our return journey. This immense spur of the Himalayas, on which we had travelled, runs from Mount Kinchinjunga to the plains of India, and forms part of the boundary between Eastern Nepal and Sikkim. On our return to Darjeeling, we learnt that this journey is at all times arduous, but that a heavy snow-storm must have fallen just before our setting out as in March the snow

on this spur is not usually so abundant, being found only in great patches. We would not have had it otherwise; but, under more favourable circumstances, the journey is easy, enough, except at parts for nervous people. We reached Darjeeling in great form after our hard work. The journey there and back, a distance of seventy or eighty miles, was accomplished in five days.

After another stay of a few days in Darjeeling, we returned to Calcutta, where the change to the moist heat, after the snow and crisp cold of the Himalayas, was almost unbearable. Staying only a few hours at the Great Eastern Hotel, we left by mail train for Bombay *en route* to Porbandar.

Here, like the Prince in the fairy tale, his wanderings were over. My companion had never really left home before, and his progress through India having from time to time been notified in the Porbandar State Gazette was watched with interest. We returned by British India Co.'s Steamer from Bombay and landed on the beach in front of the town. Every house seemed to have sent its representative in holiday attire to welcome back the wanderer. People crowded to the water's edge. Men near enough bent down and touched his feet and the cracking of knuckles among the women sounded like a salvo of small arms.*

* Note.—In Kathiawar, women salute their Chiefs by making a pass with their hands and then pressing the fingers of both hands against their temples till the knuckles crack. This is supposed to draw all evil from the person saluted on to the head of the person saluting.